THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

THE GREAT PIONEER FAMILY PAPER OF AMERICA.

Vol. 67. PUBLICATION OFFICE: No. 725 SANSOM ST. PHILADELPHIA SATURDAY, MAY 26, 1888. $2.50 A YEAR IN ADVANCE. FIVE CENTS A COPY. No. 46

INCONSTANT.

BY WM. W. LONG.

Inconstant?—dare you call me that,
When to know and feel you near is to learn
What mortal bliss from heaven is given me—
Great joy, no matter where I turn?

I would be true to you as Heaven is true;
There is no thing I would not give
To stay by you and find perfect rest;
If near you, I could always live.

HER MAD REVENGE

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PENKIVEL," "OLIVE VARCOE," "WITH THIS RING I WED THEE," ETC.

CHAPTER XXII.

LADY SAXBY sprang to her feet and hurried to Bell's side; but swift as her movements were, they were not so quick as Grace Digby's. In a moment she was beside Bell's chair; but before she proffered any assistance, she stooped and lifted the sketch which had fallen from the girl's nerveless hand and lay upturned on the white folds of her gown.

Although her glance at it was necessarily a transient one, it was long enough for her to remember the girl's face which was portrayed there. She recognized it at once as the same face as that of the portrait in Bell's boudoir of her sister, Pauline Stanley.

While she bent over Miss Hamilton in apparent anxiety and distress, her mind was busy with conjectures as to the cause of this sudden illness. Of course, it came from Bell's recognition of the sketch; but why should the sight of it give her such a shock as to render her unconscious?

The two young men, standing at a little distance in that helplessness which masculine ignorance and alarm invariably feel at a woman's sudden illness, looked on in terror lest the profound insensibility should be death.

The girl's beautiful face was white as marble, the little dark head drooped like a flower broken at the stem, the pale lips were slightly parted.

"I think she had better be placed in a recumbent position," Grace said quietly. "Mr. Leclerc will help us, perhaps?"

She had looked at both young men, but Geoffrey Hamilton was evidently too much agitated to be of any service.

Mr. Leclerc came forward slowly and with apparent reluctance; there was a strange expression of alarm and uncertainty upon his face, a puzzled, bewildered look in his blue eyes which did not escape Miss Digby's keen perception, and which increased the suspicion she had already conceived.

"Have they met before?" she wondered; if so they acted ignorance well. There is something. Is the sister living still? What can be the explanation of it?"

Fulton Leclerc's hands shook as he bent over the unconscious girl and lifted her; he, too, was full of anxiety and suspicious fears. What had caused this swoon? The sketch? What was the name—he had forgotten it for the moment—of the girl he had pretended to love in the idle dalliance of his summer days in Devonshire? It was not Hamilton, certainly, but then Hamilton was not this girl's own name either; she had only taken it with the fortune. How strangely familiar her face was, even now in its pallor and immobility!

As he lifted her, the change of posture and the movement brought some return of consciousness. As he carried her to the couch, which had been wheeled to the open window, she opened her eyes, and looking upward met his anxious gaze.

For a moment she returned it vacantly, then something like recognition crept into her eyes; and with recognition, horror; she struggled and essayed to disengage herself, and rather hastily he placed her upon the sofa, turned away, and, motioning to Hamilton to follow him, left the room.

"Let's send Mrs. Carmichael to them," he said, as they stood for a moment on the landing. "They don't want men. Don't look so scared, Hamilton; she's not dead. Women are always fainting or going into hysterics!"

He ran down-stairs to send the housekeeper to Lady Saxby's assistance, and Geoffrey followed and joined him presently in a little smoking-room adjoining the dining-room on the ground floor.

"You will let me know how she is, Mrs. Carmichael?" Geoffrey had said earnestly, to the housekeeper, whom he met on his way to the studio with brandy, and sal-volatile, and such other remedies as her experience suggested.

"Bless you, yes, sir!" was the answer, spoken in a cheerful, matter-of-fact tone, which somewhat reassured the young man's intense anxiety. "There's nothing to be alarmed at. The young lady will be all right in a few minute's. I daresay the heat and them late London hours are in fault."

She passed on, and her master went on to the smoking-room. Leclerc was there, standing by the table, on which stood glasses and aerated waters; he was pouring soda water into a tumbler in which was a strong dose of brandy, with a hand which was not quite steady.

He glanced up as his friend entered, but Geoffrey was too alarmed and anxious himself to perceive the heavy frown which darkened his face; he sat down by the table and leaned his head on his hands.

"Have a B. and S.?" suggested Fulton Leclerc carelessly. "Bother the women! They're never happy unless they are making a scene. I believe your pretty visitor fainted on purpose to show how long and dark her eyelashes were, lying on her pale cheeks."

"Rubbish!" said Hamilton moodily.

"Not rubbish at all! She's very *exaltee*, anyone can see that! Very pretty, no doubt, but tiresome and fatiguing to live with. By-the-bye, Geoff"—he had thrown himself into a chair, and was selecting a cigar from his case with unusual care, and almost elaborate precaution, as if all of them were not of the same brand, the only one he ever smoked—"what is Miss Hamilton's name?"

"Mabel," Geoff answered, his voice softening strangely as he uttered the name.

"Mabel! Bah! I did not mean her Christian name," replied the other impatiently. "I meant her surname! Where did she come from?"

"I really never heard," he answered carelessly. "I think Mrs. Hamilton met her abroad; but I was not, as you know, on good terms with my aunt-in-law during the last few years."

"What was her name? You know that, I suppose?" said Leclerc, puffing away rather rapidly, and watching the light blue spirals of smoke as they rose on the air. "You saw the will, I presume, or a copy of it?"

"Oh, yes; I saw the will! Miss Hamilton's name was Stanley."

"Stanley!"

The word escaped his lips as if involuntarily; certainly the startled tone was involuntarily, for he frowned in self-displeasure the moment after. Geoffrey, still sitting moodily, with his elbows on the table, and his head on his hands, glanced up curiously.

"Stanley. Yes, do you know her?" he said.

"No! Stanley is not a very uncommon name," replied Fulton, folding a loose leaf of his cigar, and so avoiding to look at his friend's face. "I don't think I ever saw her until to-day. Who are her people?"

"Don't know!" Geoffrey replied, rising restlessly, and going to the door, then coming back again.

"She has some, I presume?"

"I don't think so," Geoffrey answered, not noticing, in his abstraction, the sneering tone in which his friend spoke. "I believe she is an orphan, and if she had any sisters I presume they would live with her."

"She lives alone?"

"Yes."

"Without a *chaperone*?"

"What should she want a *chaperone* for?" asked Geoffrey carelessly. "People are only too fond of chaperoning her. And then her old nurse lives with her as housekeeper; I suppose that is protection enough for her!"

"My dear boy, don't get angry. When a woman has twenty thousand a-year, she can afford to do as she likes!" remarked Fulton, rising and pouring out another brandy and soda, and laughing rather bitterly as she spoke; "if you're not a fool, old man, you'll work upon her feelings, and get her to share with you. She—confound it—who—— I beg your pardon, Miss Digby."

The door opening suddenly from without had startled him. Grace's pretty figure, in its dainty blue gown, appeared upon the threshold.

"I knocked twice," she said quietly, but in a somewhat injured tone, which made the statement—which was a false one—sound almost reproachful to the two young men. "You were talking so much that you did not hear me, so there was nothing for it but to come in. I hope I did not startle you, Mr. Hamilton. I evidently alarmed Mr. Leclerc."

"How is Bell—Miss Hamilton?" stammered Geoffrey, in his eagerness.

Miss Digby smiled.

"I came down at your housekeeper's request," she answered. "Bell—Miss Hamilton"—imitating the young man's stammering eagerness, but smiling, as she did so, so sweetly as to render the imitation perfectly kindly and friendly, "is much better—quite well, in fact—and so much ashamed of her foolish fainting fit that she wishes to see Mr. Hamilton to apologize for it. You, Mr. Leclerc, will, perhaps, kindly see if the carriage has returned for us."

The words were scarcely uttered ere Geoffrey had disappeared and was rushing up the shallow oaken stairs three at a time. Miss Digby drew her lips together in a peculiar little smile.

"Mr. Hamilton does not attempt to disguise his interest in our charming invalid," she said calmly. "It would be a delightful arrangement, would not it?—and one which could not fail to give satisfaction to Mr. Hamilton's friends. But," she advanced to the table and stood making a pretty golden-haired picture in the room, which was furnished plainly and soberly, "why does Mr. Leclerc disguise his interest in Miss Hamilton?"

She fixed her keen, questioning, blue eyes on the young man's face as she spoke, and in spite of his self-possession, there was some slight embarrassment in his tone as he answered,—

"It would be impossible for me to disguise my interest in her," he said. "Every man who has the good fortune to see her must be interested in so charming a person."

"Then it was consideration for your friend which kept you in the background to-day?" she said coldly.

"Entirely," he replied with a little satirical laugh, which deepened the color in her cheek.

"And is your interest in her solely dictated by your appreciation of her charm and beauty?" asked the girl in the same quiet, meaning tone.

"Solely," he replied coolly.

"Then,"—she leaned forward while she stood and looked steadily and significantly into his face,—"what made her faint, Mr. Leclerc?"

He started slightly, but recovered himself immediately. He was a proud man, and the cool self-assertion of this girl, who occupied a dependent position in Miss Hamilton's household, rather annoyed him; moreover, there was no mistaking the significance of her tone and manner.

"The heat, probably," he answered carelessly, "or fatigue. What does make ladies faint, as a rule, Miss—ah!—Miss Digby?"

"Sometimes heat, sometimes fatigue, sometimes a shock," she replied quietly. "It was a shock in this case, Mr.—ah!—Mr. Leclerc."

"A shock. Are my sketches then so shocking? Please excuse the pun," he said languidly.

"Your sketches are only too admirable," she replied. "You have so great a talent for portrait painting that you have quite missed your vocation in adopting landscapes. Your portrait of Miss Hamilton's dead sister is so lifelike that——"

"Dead! Pauline dead!" he echoed, his face growing suddenly very pale, and his eyes staring at her with incredulous horror.

"Her name was Pauline," she said quietly. "You are quite right. Yes, she is dead. She died suddenly about two years ago."

"Suddenly? Two years ago?" he echoed, his self-possession too sorely shaken for disguise.

"Yes; so I have heard from Mrs. Fane, the housekeeper."

"Dorcas Fane!" he exclaimed involuntarily.

"That is her name," she answered, with a slight smile. "Your memory is quite correct. Mrs. Fane is out of health, nervous, and excitable, and she has a habit which is sometimes an unfortunate one: she talks in her sleep, and——"

"You have played eavesdropper?" he said scornfully.

"That is not a civil way of alluding to my attentions to Mrs. Fane," she replied tranquilly. "I have received, as perhaps you know, much kindness at her hands and those of her mistress. What I can do in return for that kindness is gladly done. Mrs. Fane is restless at night; she likes to have me with her; she is disturbed in mind, and sometimes she finds relief in making me her confidante. Oh, she is not garrulous, far from it. The besoin de s'epancher is not so great in her as it is in many women, but she tells me a little, and I have not the uncommon talent of adding two and two together."

"And so making five. Is that the way you show your gratitude for the kindness of which you speak?" he asked coldly.

He had recovered his self-possession now, and faced her calmly and steadily, with a rather contemptuous curl of the lip.

"How can I show my gratitude better than by taking an interest in what concerns those who have been kind to me?" she asked calmly, looking at him. "I have had several little matters to interest me since I have lived at Park Lane, and to-day has added another. Do you know what I have been thinking?"

"I can hardly be clever enough to guess what is passing in the brain of such an astute young lady," he replied with a slight bow

and a slight sneer.

"Perhaps not. If you were so clever," she exclaimed, almost fiercely, and showing the anger over which for a moment she had lost control, "you would have seen that it was better to make a friend of Miss—ah!—Digby than an enemy."

"How have I raised your enmity?" he said smiling, and the smile was a forced one, although he did feel some slight amusement at the girl's anger and assumption of power.

"It would have been wiser to have obtained my friendship," she said. "I might have helped you. But," she turned towards the door as she spoke, and glanced back at him over her shoulder "I don't think you would have had much chance. Do you know what her first words were when she recovered from her swoon? She looked wildly around, muttering, 'Don't let him come near me!' Lady Saxby thought she was delirious, but I knew better."

Leclerc laughed carelessly.

"How do you know," he asked, "that she did not mean Geoffrey? I have noticed that she does not seem to appreciate his attentions."

"If she meant Mr. Hamilton, she suddenly altered her mind, for as soon as she was herself again, she asked to see him, and he is with her now."

"Lucky fellow," remarked Fulton calmly. "You will own, Miss Digby, that, considering the shortness of our acquaintance, our conversation has been a rather remarkable one."

She smiled slightly, but her face flushed nevertheless. She went towards the door; the young man followed her and was about to open it for her, when she lifted her hand with a little commanding gesture, which told him to wait.

"Would you like to know what Miss Hamilton is saying to your friend?" she asked.

"Can you tell me?" he said smiling.

"I think so," she rejoined. "You shall judge of the correctness of my statement when you have heard it. She is going to ask him——"

"Judging from the length of our interview she doubtless has asked him, ere this," said the painter carelessly.

"She has asked him then," was the unreply. "She has asked him whether he spent a few weeks at Chagford two years ago, and——"

"And——?" Leclerc said hoarsely, angry with himself because the color had faded from his cheek, and angry, bitterly angry, with her for having spoken the words which had driven it thence.

"And whether he made the acquaintance of her sister there?" she said coolly. "What do you suppose his answer will be?"

He said nothing. He was white with anger and regret as he faced her.

"His answer will just be 'No!'" she said slowly. "I wonder if——"

"Miss Digby, are you coming?" Lady Saxby's imperative tones said from the hall, and the next moment her ladyship appeared on the threshold. "Ah! there you are. Do not delay any longer, if you please! Miss Hamilton is in the carriage. She is quite well again," she added, her voice resuming its graciousness as she addressed Fulton Leclerc. "You must let me say 'good-bye' for her, for I think she is very tired. Good-bye, and many thanks for your music. Don't forget that I am always at home on Thursdays."

She gave him her hand, and hurried out of the room. Miss Digby had already disappeared. Leclerc stood still near the door until he heard the carriage leaving the house; then he went back to the table and lighted a cigar. The next minute Geoffrey entered the room, and without a word, threw himself into a chair. He looked pale, startled and bewildered.

"Hallo, Geoff, what's the matter?" asked his friend, carelessly.

The other looked at him wistfully in silence for a moment, with an expression on his face which his friend, in all their years of friendship, had never seen there.

"I don't know what the matter is," he said heavily. "I have been wondering, Leclerc, if you can tell me. When I went into the studio a few minutes since, Miss Hamilton was alone; before I could approch her, she put out her hand to arrest my steps and asked me if, two years ago, I had spent some time at Chagford or Dingle. I answered naturally, 'No; I had never stayed at Chagford or Dingle.'"

"Well?" Leclerc asked; he was very pale now, and his hand, lying carelessly on the table, was not quite steady.

"That answer seemed to startle and almost to shock her. She then asked me solemnly, speaking as if the words cost her pain, almost anguish, if I had ever known her sister, Pauline Stanley."

"And——" the other said breathlessly.

"I answered 'No' to that question also. It was the truth; I never was at Chagford. I never knew Pauline Stanley."

"And she?" Leclerc asked in a low voice, breaking a short pause which had followed upon his friend's words.

"She—she turned so deadly white that I thought she was going to faint again, and looked at me in silence. I saw her lips move, but no sound came from them, then, after a pause, she put out her hand to me and just whispered—I think she could not speak aloud, 'Forgive me!' and——"

The young artist's voice failed him; the remembrance had sorely shaken his composure.

"Is that all?" Leclerc asked presently.

"Yes, that is all, except that——" He paused, looking anxiously and wistfully at his friend.

"Except what?" Fulton said hurriedly.

"Except that what I cannot understand I thought you might, Leclerc," young Hamilton said slowly. "What puzzles me may be clear to you! Can you explain it? And if you can——"

"If I can!" the other said, in a low voice. "If I can—what then?"

"If you can, will you?"

There was a minute's profound silence, then Leclerc said quietly:

"What makes you think I can explain it?"

"I don't know; I feel so confused," the young artist answered huskily; "that I am not in a condition to look at anything calmly! That sketch of a girl's face was before her when she fainted. Was that her sister's face? Did you know her? You were in Devonshire two years ago! You remained longer than you intended! Is there anything connected with that visit which I do not know?"

"Many things, probably," Leclerc said coolly "At the same time, *mon cher*, you're not my father confessor, and I fail to recognize your right to cross-examine me. If Miss Hamilton wants to know anything about my movements she can apply to me, and I am quite ready to answer any questions asked by such pretty lips as hers. Good gracious, it is half-past six, and I have to dine at Queen's Gate at seven. My *fiancee* does not like to be kept waiting."

He hurried out of the room, disregarding his friend's eager "stay, Leclerc, I must speak to you!" and Geoffrey heard him running upstairs, three steps at a time, and the slam of the dressing room door, as he shut it after him; and puzzled, anxious, distressed, yet too weak by nature, and too much under the domination of his friend to insist upon the explanation he felt Leclerc could give, Geoffrey sat in the solitary room and thought with all his might, yet could arrive at no conclusion.

That there was a mystery it was impossible to doubt, and that Fulton Leclerc was concerned in it was also undoubted, but what it was it was impossible even to conjecture.

Had Fulton wronged Miss Hamilton's sister? Where was she? Why was she not with her sister?

And why—above all why had Bell looked at him, Geoffrey, with such a look of intense pain and contrition in her beautiful sad eyes, and murmured those strange, those incomprehensible words, "Forgive me!"

What had he to forgive her, and what was there he would not have forgiven her? The young man asked himself passionately as he thought of the beautiful tender eyes, and sorrowful red lips, and little outstretched appealing hands.

And while he thought, Fulton Leclerc, in his dressing room above, disregarding the evening attire which Mrs. Carmichael had put ready for him, and the dinner engagement for which he had left the room to prepare, was pacing up and down in deep and angry and painful thought.

The woman who in a few short weeks was to be his wife was completely forgotten; in that moment, she who filled his thoughts to the exclusion of all else, was the woman he had feigned to love in those summer days two years before; the woman who had loved him as he never would be loved again; the woman he had deserted, whose heart he had broken, and who had died in her sister's arms one July day at dawn.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ALTHOUGH Grace Digby watched with keenest, most eager scrunity, she saw nothing in Miss Hamilton's face during the homeward drive, but the intense pallor and set stern look, which were perhaps, the natural result of her sudden and alarming illness. She watched in vain, too, for a look in Bell's eyes, they surely would betray some sign of pain or distress; but the girl kept her long, dark lashes downcast, and so the anguish which lay deep in their lustrous depths were hidden, and the companion, who acted well her part of anxious sympathy, was to some measure disappointed.

Bell herself was scarcely conscious of what was going on around her; perhaps even that intensity of anguish she had suffered when she had watched her sister's death-agony had not been greater than this which she suffered now; that at least had been free from the sting of remorse which added its dreadful bitterness to this.

She never remembered that drive home, although she succeeded in deceiving even the keen eyes of Grace Digby—rendered keener by the suspicions she had conceived, suspicions in which were a certain amount of truth—saw nothing of her misery, and Lady Saxby was quite willing to attribute her languor and silence to her late swoon.

"You have been doing too much this season, poor child," said her ladyship sympathetically, as she patted Bell's small hand, whose icy chill struck even through her glove, as it lay passive in her own little fingers. "This London life is terribly trying, especially to a sympathetic girl like you who is troubled with a heart and a conscience, and similar useless appendages! You feel for your admirers when you dismiss them, my pretty Bell! and that is a fatal mistake, you know!" she added laughingly.

"A fatal mistake!" Bell whispered, the words parting her pale, stiff lips being inaudible even to the eager ears of Grace Digby, sitting opposite to her in the softly-cushioned carriage. Yes, I have made a fatal mistake."

"It has been very warm to-day also," Lady Saxby went on, in her cheerful yet concerned voice; "and the scent of those roses, exquisite as they were, was rather oppressive even although the windows were open! And I am afraid you are not very strong, Bell—you are always so pale. The Snow Queen, your admirers call you, you know."

"The Snow Queen," Miss Digby exclaimed. "What a pretty name!"

"Yes, and so suitable for one so white and cold," Lady Saxby said, smiling, and glancing at the beautiful still white face, but Bell said nothing; she had neither heard nor heeded the words which had followed those which had struck her—"A fatal mistake!"

Aye, in the very truth indeed she had made a great, fatal mistake! Just then this was all she could feel, all she could understand. The revenge she had so carefully planned, the revenge to which she had devoted the fairest years of her life had been a mistake: she had been deceived, she had deceived herself, and she had not known of her mistake until now, when the knowledge of it stunned her into the dull apathy of despair. Yet her face told nothing; it was white and set and beautiful as if carved in alabaster, or as she were indeed the snow queen of whom Lady Saxby had spoken.

The carriage rolled rapidly through the busy streets until it reached Park Lane, and then the coachman pulled up and Lady Saxby's footman sprang down to open the door for the two girls to alight.

"Good-bye, dear," Lady Saxby said as she released Bell's little hand with a kindly pressure of her own. "You must have a good long rest. You will not go out this evening I hope. It will be better not, even if Mrs. Bruce's ball will lose its fairest ornament, You will not go to it, Bell?"

"Not to-night," Bell answered mechanically! She had not understood the question but she saw that a negative answer was expected, and she smiled, a little pale, forced smile, as she nodded a farewell, and passed up the broad white steps into the stately marble-paved hall of the house of which Bell Stanley had made herself mistress.

Without a word to Grace who was walking beside her, watching her with the keen attention which had not varied for a moment, and which she concealed so cleverly under an assumption of sorrowful, anxious tenderness, Bell crossed the hall toward her own sitting-room; but even as her hand rested on the *portiere*, she drew back and turned away with a little shudder. It seemed as if she could not meet Pauline's sweet blue eyes as they looked on her from the canvas on which her fair face was painted. Turning from the door, she stood for a moment motionless, as if hesitating where to go next, with a strange feeling strong upon her that she had no right to enter any room in the house where she reigned mistress.

"Shall I send Mrs. Fane to you, dear Miss Hamilton?" Grace said gently.

"Mrs. Fane? Why?" Bell asked absently; then remembering herself, "No, no," she said quickly, feeling that she would rather see anyone than Dorcas, just then; "I do not want her—or anyone," she added.

"May I not come with you?" Grace went on in her soft voice, yet with an eager look in her eyes which even in her abstraction Miss Hamilton noticed.

She looked at her calmly, for the eagerness had startled her into fuller consciousness of what suspicions might be aroused if she betrayed that her sudden swoon had been caused by anything but heat and fatigue.

"Oh, no, thank you," she said quietly. "Hammond will be in my room, of course? You will excuse me coming down to dinner this evening," she went on. "Perhaps, if I keep perfectly quiet for an hour or two, I may feel equal to Mrs. Bruce's ball; and as it will be one of the best, and one of the last of the season, it seems a pity to miss it."

She turned from Grace and went slowly up to her own rooms, longing, with a great longing, to be alone. But the solitude for which she craved was not to be hers yet.

As she entered her dressing room, looking around her with a strange uncertain glance, with a still more intensified feeling of having no right to be there, her maid turned round from a wardrobe which she was arranging, and exclaimed in startled tones at her mistress's pallor and languid movements.

"I am very tired, that is all," Bell said quickly. "Take off my gown, Hammond, and get me some tea. I don't think I will go out again this evening."

"But the ball, ma'am?" Hammond exclaimed, in irrepressible dismay. "And your dress is so lovely! It came this afternoon!"

"It—it will do for another time," Bell said carelessly. "Be as quick as you can, Hammond; I am too tired to stand."

In silence, and with deft, skilful fingers, Hammond removed the pretty white gown, substituting for it a loose cambric wrapper. Bell, in her fear of arousing suspicion, submitted patiently to her ministrations, and then, when she had brought her some tea, dismissed her finally, assuring the girl who was fond of her kind, considerate young mistress, that he would ring for her if she needed anything.

Bell gave the maid a languid little smile, as she turned to leave the room. She was lying back in a low cushioned arm-chair, with the tea equipage on a small table besides her. She looked languid, and indolent, and thoroughly at her ease as she reclined there, waiting for that solitude which is always hard for the rich to obtain as it is impossible for the poor; but the door had hardly closed upon the servant when she sprang up and began pacing up and down the dainty, luxurious room in which she had no right to be.

And then—

Ah, then!—the agony, remorse, and bitter pain found vent, not, alas, in the merciful relief of tears, but in dry, tearless, terrible sobs which shook the girl, as a slender tree is shaken by a storm of wind.

Now, for the first time, she realized fully what she had done; hitherto she had blinded herself, refusing to see the evil in her actions, the sin of that wild, absorbing passion for revenge which had held her in its hideous bondage for so long; but now she saw it in all its horror.

What had she done? What had she done? She had not only stained her own soul with the foul stain of sin, but she had stained the souls of others. Her faithful nurse and friend, Dorcas Fane, had sinned for her and through her, and was suffering for her sin now, suffering keenly and shattered in health and nerves.

She had spared nothing in her wild despair for vengeance; she had sacrificed her own truth and beauty and womanly sweetness. She had longed and lusted after the sweetness of revenge—ah, surely it was only fitting that now she should drink to the dregs the bitterness of remorse!

On her dressing-table amid a hundred costly and dainty trifles, a portrait of her sister held the place of honor, standing where Bell's eyes always rested upon it when she sat before the dressing-table; now it seemed, to her excited fancy, as she paced up and down that the sweet eyes seemed to follow her from out of the pretty plush frame with a reproachful look. Bell turned from them with a little low cry of pain, pressing her hand to her throbbing heart!

More than once in these last miserable months it had seemed to her that she had read that reproachful look in the soft eyes, and had turned from it, and hardened her heart, and told herself that she was right—quite right—to revenge her sister's cruel

wrongs; but now that delusion had passed for ever. She could think so no longer. Then, when the thought that what she had done, what she longed to do, was sinful, had come to her, she had put it away, hardening her heart against the promptings of her better nature; but now she could harden it no longer.

When she had shrank back in horror at her unwomanly cruelty, and her soul had fainted within her at the baseness of her conduct in smiling upon the man she longed to smite, she had recalled her beloved sister—her suffering and her death—and she had gathered her strength afresh for the shameful struggle; but now the remembrance of Pauline's still, lovely face, with the light of a new-born day upon it, and of her fainting head upon her shoulder, brought only self-reproach of the keenest—self-reproach and despair.

She had sinned in vain; she had suffered in vain. The revenge for which she had thirsted had fallen upon the innocent, the guilty had gone scot free! There was not the faintest shadow of doubt in her mind as to Geoffrey Hamilton's innocence of any wrong to the sister whom she had avenged. The other man—his friend—was guilty.

It was he, Fulton Leclerc, who had spent those weeks at Dingle during which he had won Pauline's love to make it the pastime of his idleness; and then, having wearied of her tenderness, he had removed himself from the spell of her beauty and had thrown aside her love as carelessly as if it had been a cast-off glove, and in so doing had broken her heart.

But although he had sinned, what had his—Fulton Leclerc's—sin been compared with her's Mable Stanley's? His had been the sin of a careless, inconstant nature; incapable, perhaps, of true love, selfish impressionable, unfaithful. He had not known that Pauline loved him so well, that her love was part of her life; he had, doubtless imagined it to be a passing fancy like his own.

He had thought her like one of the girls in the world in which he moved, girls whose one ambition was to make a wealthy marriage, to have diamonds and an opera box: he did not know that to a woman like Pauline all these things were worthless compared to the value of a good honorable man's love.

Thus he had sinned in blindness, and there was some slight excuse for him—but she—she had sinned with her eyes open to the horror of her sin, deliberately, thoughtfully planning her crime—for crime it had been!—as any hardened criminal might have done; there was no excuse for her.

She had cherished hatred, malice and vengeance in her heart until they had filled it, to the exclusion of all gentler feelings. They had absorbed her, they had usurped so great a place in her mind that there was no room there for love, or honor, or truth, or kindliness. She had robbed—aye, that was the word; there was none other!—an innocent man of his inheritance; she had made him suffer when he had done no wrong!

And this was the result of the arrogance with which she had usurped herself the right of vengeance which belongs to no earthly being. Resolutely, unhesitatingly she had gone on her path; it had been of necessity a joyless one. Nay she knew in her inmost heart that her sorrow, her natural grief for her sister's death would long ago have given place to a more softened feeling of resignation, and that her life might have been peaceful, if not joyous; but it had seemed to her then as if there had been no other way possible to her but the one she had followed, while now she knew that of all the hard and difficult roads, she had chosen the hardest and most difficult. And it had been all a mistake!

Geoffrey Hamilton had never seen her sister, his eyes had never rested upon her face until they had glanced down upon the sketch which Fulton Leclerc had made of the woman he had betrayed. The wrong had not been committed by him, but by his friend, in his name!

Minutes grew into hours as she paced up and down the luxurious room in a frenzy of suffering, which allowed her no rest of mind or body; a great stillness reigned in the house; the perfectly-trained servants went about their tasks in their usual noiseless manner, and even the gossip of the servant's hall had not touched upon any unusual cause for Miss Hamilton's non-appearance at dinner.

It is by no means an unfrequent thing for dinner to be disregarded in a household reigned over by a young girl, when there is no male member to whom the meal is an important institution, and Bell's French chef de cuisine had long ago found that his skill was wasted when exercised solely for his young mistress.

To-night the tea, which Hammond had brought up, stood untasted on the little table, although the fever of Bell's mind had parched her lips until they were as dry as dust, and her eyes burned with a hot throbbing fire, uncooled by a rain of tears.

The night was warm, almost sultry, but Bell shivered as she stood in her luxurious room as if a cold blast blew upon her; her hands were chill as death, her heart seemed turned to stone within her.

Her remorse and anguish seemed to bow her down to the very earth; she felt as if never again could she bear to look upon the light of day, or to meet the eyes of her fellow creatures.

There was but one thing to do, she thought, sinking at last from sheer exhaustion into a chair and putting back her loosened hair from her throbbing temples; make what atonement she could to Geoffrey Hamilton, and then return to the White House, and pray that death, which had been merciful to Pauline, would be merciful to her also.

But in order to make atonement to Geoffrey Hamilton she must confess, perhaps publicly, the sin by which she had wronged him, and this confession would not only bring her within reach of punishment, but Dorcas would be involved,—Dorcas, who had sinned at her instigation only, and who had suffered cruelly at her guilt.

Could she tell the truth, when the truth meant prison and shame to Dorcas Fane? Would they believe that only she, Bell herself, was really guilty, that she had influenced Dorcas, she, a young girl, not yet twenty years old? Would they let the elder woman go free and let her, the only really guilty one, bear the punishment which she, and she alone, deserved?

Would the law, of whose power the girl was perfectly ignorant, but which she magnified to its utmost extent, spare Dorcas, and let retribution fall upon her, who alone merited it?

If not—if not, it would kill Dorcas! Poor Dorcas, who had suffered so terribly already in her terror of discovery and its consequent shame.

Thickly the thoughts crowded in upon the girl's troubled mind, excited as she was, her imagination quickened to more than its usual vividness by the tension on her nerves.

She pictured the shame of the public trial, the examination in court, the cold eyes of the lawyers, the condemnation on the face of the judge.

She seemed to hear herself telling, before the crowded audience, the story of Pauline's death, of her betrayed love and broken heart, amid the sneers and indifference of her hearers, perhaps their laughter!

She shivered in every limb as she thought of her sister's beloved and sacred name spoken amid derision and scorn. How could she bear it?

And then, when the trial was over, she and Dorcas would be punished, their sin—hers in truth, although shared by Dorcas—was one which was punishable by law—if Fulton Leclerc's were not! And yet—and yet, surely his was the greater!

And no excuse would be made for her or for Dorcas. The judge would not believe that they were actuated by any other feeling but that of cupidity.

He would believe that Pauline's story was a mere fabrication, invented as an excuse for their sin, and his belief would be confirmed when Geoffrey Hamilton should say that he had never seen or heard of Pauline Stanley, and that he consequently had never betrayed her.

There would be nothing to palliate their guilt—nothing. Mason, Mrs. Hamilton's maid, who could perhaps have witnessed to her mistress's wishes, which she had helped to carry out, was dead. There would be only her, Bell's, word, and who would credit that?

True, the letter which Mrs. Hamilton had herself written to Mr. Clark might be still in existence, but the chances were against it, the girl thought bitterly, and of all people she could ask no help from Mr. Clark or from his nephew.

His nephew, Alick Holt!—he who had suspected her guilt! Would he be called to witness against her? The very thought of it seemed to turn the blood, which had been coursing so wildly through Bell's veins, into ice.

She started to her feet in a sudden, terrible dread, and as she did so, the inner door of the room where she stood was thrown violently open, and Dorcas Fane, white to ghastliness, shaking in every limb, her eyes staring wildly, came staggering towards her.

"Miss Bell—Miss Bell," she said, in a hoarse terrible voice; "it has come—at last—I knew it would—it has come at last!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SOME AMUSING HOAXES.

A FEW years ago some burglars paid a midnight visit to a shop in a certain city. The cashbox lay handy. It was heavy—very heavy. Here was booty, they thought, so they did not wait to help themselves to anything else but decamped with the cash-box and its precious contents. Next morning it was found not far from the premises; and in an ashpit, close by, a lump of lead was discovered, which was all the booty they got, for their intended victim had been too artful for them.

A Parisian lady, whose husband had gone to China on business, one day received a letter dated from Old China Street, Canton. "Madam," it ran, "I have to announce a mournful event. Your husband, captured by Malay pirates, has been burned alive, and his bones calcined to powder. I have, with great difficulty, been able to procure a few pinches of this powder, which I enclose."

As the distracted widow opened the box, a strange idea came into her head; and sending for some snuff, she mixed the powder with it, and piously inhaled all that was left of her lost spouse. A few days later a letter arrived from her husband, and proved that the story of his capture and calcination was the work of some unknown enemy.

Speculation is a risky affair; but we cannot help thinking that the perpetrator of the following was a disappointed rival. A young couple were about to be married at a synagogue, and all was going merrily as a marriage bell, when the proceedings were interrupted by the arrival of a telegram, running as follows: "Stop marriage at once. His wife and children have arrived, and will come on."

The bride fainted away; the bridegroom protested on his oath that it was all a malicious hoax, but had to make the best of his way, a single man still, through an exasperated crowd, full of sympathy for the much-wronged girl, whose parents found upon inquiry that they had been duped. But then, the marriage was off.

Some years ago the inhabitants of an inland town were startled with the news that a mermaid was singing on a rock some distance from the shore of the lake. They all flocked down there, and, sure enough, saw the mermaid decking her hair with shells, and heard her sing her plaintive song.

The next night there was a rush to the beach. Again the mermaid appeared and flashed the moonbeams about with her hand-mirror. Telescopes were brought into requisition, but she took not the slightest heed, and continued braiding her tresses and singing her songs in profound indifference to the excitement she caused.

Next night it was the same, and the next, and the next; only the crowd grew denser and the mermaid hoarser, as if she had caught a cold. At last she seemed to get tired of it, and after winding up her vocal entertainment by lustily singing something strongly resembling "Sweet Violets," dived off the rock and was seen no more.

But wonderfully irate did the population become when it was found out that the strange visitant was no other than a student of divinity, whose legs were enveloped in oilskin, and whose head was covered with plaited seaweed.

An odd hoax on a mild scale was once perpetrated at Oxford. It was at the time when Madame de Staël was the rage; and a certain undergraduate, who had made the great lady's acquaintance while in France, was not backward in letting his friends know of the fact.

It was hinted abroad that she had arrived in England and intended to return this gentleman's visit. He received a letter purporting to be from Madame de Staël, and became all at once an object of universal respect.

By-and-by it was announced that she had come and her friend ventured to invite the vice-chancellor and the heads of the houses to meet her at breakfast. The party assembled; the breakfast went off admirably, all present being charmed with the grace, wit, and brilliant conversation of the heroine of the occasion.

It was not until many weeks afterwards that it came out that the dame who had captivated all hearts was not only not Madame de Staël, but merely a counterfeit presentment, admirably acted by a clever undergraduate conversant with French manners and the French tongue.

A WIDOW, 60 years of age, who lives near Albion, N. Y., has sued a widower 17 years her senior for breach of promise. She claims that he was to have married her this spring, but that before the appointed time he had taken unto himself a wife of fifty summers.

Bric-a-Brac.

HANDWRITING.—No reliance is to be placed on the many presumed indications of character. On the hand-writing very little is be placed; yet men of great decision of character usually write a hard, firm hand, with decided downstrokes in the letters; antiquarians often write a small, precise hand in keeping, perhaps with their character and pursuits; poets and novelists a free flowing hand, etc.

HUNTING THE WREN.—An odd custom formerly existed in Ireland and the Isle of Man under the name of "hunting the wren." The wrens were killed and carried in holly-bushes from house to house as a punishment for having picked some crumbs left over supper, and thereby awakened the sleeping drummer boy of a Danish army which the Irish were about to surprise. In the Isle of Man the wren was laid out and carried on the brier to the parish church with much pomp and ritual.

PAWNBROKERS.—Some odd and funny things are often offered to pawnbrokers on which to advance money, but the most ludicrous incident of that nature occurred in one some time ago. A fairly well-dressed man entered the store, looked cautiously around, and then plucking a false tooth from his upper set, he held it over the counter to the proprietor and asked him if he would give him fifty cents for it. The offer was not accepted and ten minutes later he tried it again at another pawnshop.

THE WALNUT.—In such estimation was the walnut formerly held in Germany, that in some rural districts no young farmer was allowed to marry until he was the possessor of a certain number of growing trees. The foreign stores of the "common" walnut—which yields the handsomest and most valuable timber—are now supplemented by the black American walnut which has long been naturalised in England. It is largely employed by gunmakers, is extremely tough and durable, and is at once distinguishable by the peculiar purplish-brown color of the matured wood.

ON THE WING.—A learned professor of natural history has made a discovery that certain birds may sleep on the wing. Birds of prey and some others, he says, can lock together the parts of the wing holding the extended feathers. "The action of the air on the wing in this condition extends to the elbow, which is prevented from opening too far by a cartilage, and the wings may be kept in this position for an indefinate time, with no muscular action whatever on the part of the bird." Without exertion a bird may thus be carried far by a horizontal current, and might easily go to sleep.

EASY DIVORCE.—At Trichur, a town of the Madras coast, in India, divorce seems to be as simple as marriage is easy. The Nair lady is a very independent person. Someone offers a cloth; that is the proposal. If she accepts it; that is the marriage. If she gets tired of her husband, she gets rid of him and takes on with another, and is not held to have behaved disgracefully in so doing. By cloth is meant the garment worn by women in the East, and it may be very plain or cheap, or very rich and costly. But to give one is very significant, as a distinguished visitor to Trichur found when he offered one to a Nair lady in whose house he had received some civility.

THE CHINESE BRIDE.—In China if the bride break the heel of her shoe in going from her father's to her husband's house it is ominous of unhappiness in her new relations. A piece of bacon and a parcel of sugar are hung on the back of a bride's sedan-chair as a sop to the demons who might molest her while on her journey. The "Three Baneful Ones" are fond of salt and spices, and the "White Tiger" likes sweets. A bride, while putting on her wedding garments, stands in a round, shallow basket. This conduces her to leading a placid, well-rounded life in her future home. After her departure from her father's door her mother puts the basket over the mouth of the oven, to stop the mouths of all who would make averse comment on her daughter, and then sits down before the kitchen range, that her peace and leisure may be duplicated in her daughter's life.

In the Sandwich Islands the women ride astride, and wear but one garment, usually of French calico, close at the throat and extending from the yoke to the ankles. The gown is quite free and flowing, not confined at the waist, the wearer being generally bare-legged and bare-footed. Even the foreign-born ladies often appear in the same style of dress, adding slippers and hose.

CONTENT.

All lands are fair to him who knows content.
All skies are sunny, and all fields are green;
In dreamy mists with softest azure blent
Lie distant cloud-lands tipped with silver sheen.

The wayside violet sheds her fragrance sweet;
For him the wild rose's blushes all are spent;
Life's fullest gifts are poured about the feet
Of him within whose heart is found content.

From Out the Storm.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "DICK'S SWEETHEART," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—(CONTINUED)

SOMETHING in his manner warned her, and she glanced up quickly.

"Not if you don't wish it," she said, a little hastily.

"I do wish it!" said he defiantly. "I came for this."

He went over to a chair that was pushed back against the wall, pulled it out, and picked up from the floor behind it a white rose—faded now, but still sweet, and exhaling a perfume.

"You dropped this," he said. "It was difficult to pick it up when all the rest were looking on; but I pushed it in there, and watched and waited until the house slept—as I believed—to come and rescue it."

He spoke with a certain carefulness even yet; but the fire in his eyes and voice broke through all bonds and betrayed him to her.

She rose abruptly to her feet, her face whitening.

"Nigel!" she said. Her voice trembled; it was such a disastrous—such a terrible discovery to her that words failed her. A sense of loss too was with it.

His friendship, upon which she had so fondly relied—where was it now? Gone—swallowed up in the fierce torrent of this overwhelming passion.

"You are surprised," he said, with a short laugh that was miserable enough to bring tears to her eyes. "I have deceived you successfully all along, have I not? You have trusted in me as the calm agreeable friend to whom you could turn when troubles assailed you. You were almost sorry for me when paltry gossip—as short-sighted as it was contemptible—insisted that my mild friendship was but another name for love. But now, you know."

He spoke with an open defiance, as though gloryingin her blindness. His black eyes gleamed, and his nostrils were slightly dilated.

"What do you call me now?" he went on, as though passion long repressed drove him hither and thither as it willed. "A traitor—one who purposely misled and deceived you!"

He had been speaking with a fierce impetus, but now it failed him suddenly and his voice sank.

"Is this to be the end of it," he said—"that you are to remember me only with scorn and hatred? Oh, Marvel!"

He fell at her feet and took a fold of her gown in his hands and pressed his lips to it convulsively.

The girl stood motionless, as if turned to stone—shocked, horrified, hardly yet believing.

It was a hateful revelation that robbed her of one good friend upon whose goodwill she would have staked much, and she was unable for the moment to realize the anguish that lay crouching at her feet.

"Marvel!" he said again, in a low stifled tone; and still no word of comfort, no hope of pardon, came from her. A long awful minute swept by in absolute silence, and then he spoke again.

"You have judged me and condemned!" he said faintly, still with his face hidden in her gown. "It is just perhaps, but ——"

A heavy sigh escaped him which rose and reached her ears.

Suddenly the floods of pity that always lay close to her gentle heart broke loose. She bent down over him, and with her slender white hands tried to raise him to his feet.

"Oh, no, no!" she whispered brokenly. "Oh, Nigel, it is a miserable thing, but perhaps you could not help it!"

The simplicity of the little speech went to his very soul. No, he could not have helped it.

"Darling! Beloved!" he said, with a wild sob or two, and caught the tender healing hands and pressed them to his lips.

"You must not speak like that," she said anxiously, bending over him and releasing after a moment one of her hands from his; the other he clung to with a desperate longing. "You forget. Do not kneel there, Nigel, but get up and listen to me."

He rose, obedient to her word, and stood before her with his head down-bent, as if ashamed of the emotion he betrayed. He still held her right hand, as though he could not bear to part with it; and she of her goodness did not seek to withdraw it after that one first effort.

He held the pretty fingers pressed closely within his own, as though by means of them he might still keep near to her who seemed to him an angel sent down from the blue sky above him, not for his joy but his undoing!

She began to speak again, this time slowly and with a tremulous accent.

"Surely you do not remember," she said, "how it is with me."

"That is what I do remember. That is what has driven me to this! You would tell me that you are a woman with a husband, to whom therefore all other spoken love save his is but an insult. But are there no exceptions to a cold rule like that? If I, loving you as I do, and if he, loving you not at all——"

"Oh, hush!" she breathed faintly.

But he would not listen; the storm of his desire had caught him now in all its fury and was hurling him along.

"Do you still believe in such days as these, that, however a man may neglect a woman, she should still be loyal to him, because a few most senseless words have been read over their heads—that should for that cause too cast aside as unworthy all other love, however sacred, however earnest it might be?"

He paused and looked at her eagerly.

"Yes," said Marvel, in a soft sweet voice "that is what I do believe."

"You cling to the traditions of your childhood!" cried he impatiently. "What you then learned seems to you still to be all that is best and right? Have you never a fuller vision? Is it not possible to you to imagine something broader, more lifelike than the dull programme you have arranged for yourself?"

Marvel stood hesitating, as it seemed to him as he hoped; but her silence had to do only with a desire to answer him as her heart and honest sense of right dictated. She raised her head presently, and looked fairly at him, no embarrassment in her lovely eyes.

"I think," she said gently, "that a woman should respect herself—that, when a name is given into her keeping, no matter in what circumstances"—with a sad flushing of the earnest brow—"she should guard it as a sacred trust."

"You mean that it is your duty to respect and guard the honor of a man who deliberately and wilfully neglects you?"

"You grow too personal," she said, still very gently, but with some dignity. "I have said that a woman should respect not her husband so much as herself."

"And at the same time break her heart and that of the man who truly loves her! And all for what? Is life so long that we can let the best of it go by for the sake of a mere empty shell called respectability? Must we be ever 'the galley-slaves of dreary forms!' Here, on this hand, is one who hardly cares whether you live or die; and here"—he drew closer to her—"is one who—— Marvel, you know what I would say! There are other lands, other——"

"Stay! Do not speak—do not, I entreat you!" cried she sharply, as if in bitter fear. She raised her hands to cover her ears, and then, as if unable longer to control herself, she burst into tears. Ah, was it indeed true that he—Wriothesley—cared not whether she lived or died? How horrible a thought! Alas, why could not she die if that was all she wanted?

At that moment Mrs. Verulam re-entered the room. She glanced first at Marvel, in tears, and then at Savage, white and wretched, and a rather dismayed expression came into her eyes.

"What is this? What has happened?" she asked, turning indignantly to Savage.

"It is nothing—nothing indeed," said Marvel miserably; "it is only my own folly."

"On the contrary, my fault," interrupted Savage gloomily. "I said something to Lady Wriothesley that annoyed her; I am not however"—doggedly—sorry—"sorry that I said it."

"Then you ought to be!" said Mrs. Verulam angrily. "What on earth could it have been to reduce her to this state?"

"I told her I loved her," said he sullenly. Then he went up to Marvel. "I wish you wouldn't cry like that," he said angrily; "I wish I were dead rather than have made you cry, and you know it! If you have any humanity in you, stop!"

He was indeed as white as death as he spoke; and even Mrs. Verulam, who was very angry with him, could not doubt but that it was honest emotion, born of however wrong a cause, that made him so.

"I think you had better make up your quarrel as quickly as you can," she said impatiently. "A little more of this and the day will begin to break. Marvel, say good night to Mr. Savage and come up-stairs with me. You can punish him in the morning, if you will."

"There will be no morning for that sort of thing," said he mournfully. "I shall have left this by dawn. I was about to bid Lady Wriothesley farewell when you came in."

"You are going?" said Marvel.

"Yes—for ever!"

He looked with haggard entreaty into Mrs. Verulam's eyes.

"If I might—if you would let me be alone with her for even three minutes!" he said.

Cicely hesitated, and then gave in. After all, three minutes out of the rest of his lifetime was not much to grant. She went silently out of the room and closed the door behind her.

"You are really going? I shall lose my friend!" said Marvel, deep sadness in her tone. All things seemed to be deserting her.

"Not if you wish it otherwise—if——"

She put up her hand.

"Let our last words be such as I shall care to remember," she said quite brokenly.

"Tell me," said he, taking her hand and speaking as if with difficulty—"I know it already, yet, cruel as the longing is, I do long to hear it from your own lips—you have never loved me?"

She hesitated and grew so miserable that he certainly knew it then, if not before.

"Dear Nigel, as a friend I do indeed dearly love you," she said nervously; "but ——"

"No—no more; it is needless!"

He checked her abruptly.

"Good-bye!" he said, taking both her hands in his. "God bless you!"

He bent over them and kissed them vehemently.

He seemed lost in grief, and the tears were running down her cheeks, when a sound behind them made both start. Wriothesley was standing in the middle of the room gazing at them with an expression of profound disgust.

CHAPTER XXXV.

"ARE you going?" said Lord Wriothesley to Savage, who came towards him. "Pray don't let me——"

"Can you give me a few moments?" said Savage, some agitation in his tone.

"Certainly—though, if you could make it one, I should feel grateful." They were outside in the hall now, and had closed the door of the supper-room so that Marvel might not hear. "Well?" he said harshly. He found a strange difficulty in speaking at all, as passion was fast getting the mastery of him. He was conscious of a dangerous longing to take this man by the throat and shake the very life out of him: but he knew that it would hardly do to make a scene there and at this hour, and strove hard to control himself. He would save from the blighting touch of scandal, if he could—not Marvel indeed—she was not worth it—but the good old family name.

"I am leaving England—Europe—for an indefinite time; I start to-morrow," began Savage hurriedly. "Just now you witnessed my farewell to her. You know I love her; but"—he was speaking very disconnectedly—"I feared from what you saw that you might misinterpret—might think that Lady Wriothesley entertained for me anything warmer than the most ordinary friendship."

He stopped, hopelessly embarrassed. It was indeed a clumsy speech, and Wriothesley put it from him, as it were, with an insulting gesture and a short laugh.

"Not I," said he. "That Lady Wriothesley should do you the honor to esteem you above the crowd? No! Believe me, you flatter yourself, sir, most vainly."

He ran his eyes contemptuously over Savage from head to foot. His whole air was so studiously insolent that Savage in turn felt his wrath grow hot within him—his eyes flashed and the color forsook his lips; but Wriothesley, as though disdaining further converse with him, went back into the supper-room and deliberately shut the door in his face.

Marvel was still standing on the hearth-rug, her handkerchief to her eyes, crying softly, but miserably. The sight of her so maddened Wriothesley: a very demon of rage and shame and disappointment shook him. He leaned over the back of a chair and stared at her with eager gloomy eyes, and a cruel little sneering smile curled his lip.

"Quite right, my dear," he said slowly. "Better cry now than later on. I congratulate you on the common sense that kept you from running away with him."

Marvel's hand trembled a little, but she did not look up or change her position in any way.

"I have no doubt you think now you have reached the very lowest depths of grief," he went on, in the same sneering tone. "But is it really necessary you should shed such torrents of tears? Is it good enough? The loss of that rather brigand-like lover of yours is of course a severe one; but you will get over it. And let me assure you that, humdrum and prosaic as a respectable life with me must appear after the brilliant career he offered you, still it will be a life that will pay you better in the long run than—er—that other."

If he thought to see her shrink—hurt, angry, wounded—from him after such an abominable speech, he found himself immensely mistaken.

She threw up her head with a pretty proud movement, came a few steps closer to him, and looked him full in the face with large indignant eyes.

"You are a very vulgar person!" she said, in her clear distinct voice.

He was quite as surprised as though she had given him a little blow. The sneering demon vanished from his face and a great weariness took its place; he looked suddenly older, worried and hopeless, and, coming from the back of the chair, dropped languidly upon the seat of it.

"I'm tired of it all," he said.

"Tired of me, you mean," said she, with some spirit.

"Be that as it may, I confess I want now to have done with the whole thing. You are unhappy with me; I am—not happy with you."

He made the little subtle difference in the two meanings apparent to her by the slight pause.

"Let us come to some decision."

"You mean a separation?"

She hated herself passionately at the moment because of the tears she fought so wildly to subdue. She stood before him, trembling, angry, in a miserable despair, yet so lovely, so sweet—a thing "that was whiter than thistle-down"—that he hardly dared trust himself to look at her lest his righteous rage should cool within him.

"Not a formal one," he said. "For Heaven's sake, let us not be town-talk for the amusement of our friends! Vulgar as you deem me"—with a slight frown—"I would carefully avoid that. But I see no reason why we should annoy each other with these perpetual scenes and with the presence of each other."

"I don't see how you are going to manage it—just at present, at all events. You are coming with me to Cicely's, are you not?"

"Certainly not. I shall cancel the engagement. You can go your way for the future, and I shall go mine—I have had quite enough of this sort of thing. I don't care about spending the rest of my life watching you weeping over your farewells to your lovers."

"Take care!" said she, in a low voice.

"Why? Can you deny that he loves you—that he told you so—and more—more?" His brow grew black again.

"If he does love me, that is no reason why you should address me in such a tone. I could not prevent that misfortune; it was no fault of mine—I had nothing to do with it."

"Of course not—no woman ever yet had. It is the regulation answer. However, let that pass. The real matter at issue is that I shall cease to worry you with my presence. I shall accompany you and Cicely as far as town to-morrow, and then run across to Paris or somewhere."

"A charming arrangement for you, no doubt; and what of me?"

"You can go where you will. You have apparently hosts of dear friends who will gladly welcome the new fashionable beauty"—with a bitter smile—"to their houses. Whenever you tire of them, or whenever you want me to get you out of another dilemma—such as that 'lock-up' affair—you can drop me a line."

He was as good as his word. In the morning he accompanied them to town, saw them into the train that would take them down to Grangemore, and bade them a calm farewell upon the platform. It was all a surprise to Cicely, and, at the first knowledge of it, a regret; but after a while she began to regard it as a salutary movement, and consoled herself with the reflection that absence has been very often proved the most beneficial of medicines.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SIX weeks of silence. Whether Wriothesley was in Paris or Timbuctoo was unknown to Marvel. February had come and gone, bringing its sweet promise of opening buds, and leaving that promise fulfilled.

March had come in, in the orthodox way, with the roar of a lion enraged, but after a day or two had subsided into the tamest of animals, and was now all smiles and sweetness—to Mrs. Verulam's deep satisfaction, as her house-party had arrived.

Marvel, who had a positive talent for slipping into her clothes and looking lovely in an incredibly short space of time, had just finished her dinner toilette; and, going downstairs in the rather joyless, emotionless manner that had characterised her of late, she made her way into the inner drawing-room, which communicated with the larger reception-room by means of hanging curtains.

It was a smaller room, and cosier; and this evening she felt chilled, and disinclined for the lively chatter in which she usually held a high place.

She was indeed fast developing into a brilliant creature made to be copied and admired, though at heart she was still the tender loving child who held affection for and from the beloved object the supremest good on earth.

She sank with a thankful sigh into a low lounging-chair, and, in the soft twilight of a glorious fire, gave herself up to thought.

She was dressed, as usual, in a white clinging gown of lace and satin that rose close to her throat, but left her arms bare to the shoulder.

She had raised them and thrown them behind her, so that her head could rest upon the palms of her joined hands.

The firelight shone upon her thoughtful face and played amongst the soft locks that grew in a riotous confusion on her forehead.

She had stretched herself in happy anticipation of no disturbance, and one dainty-shod foot was lying crossed over the other, and both were peeping from beneath the ivory satin of her skirt.

She made an exquisite picture, lying thus in her white robes, with her shining eyes filled with a certain melancholy. White was the color she loved best—the color her auntie had ever chosen for her.

"Do you always wear white?" Wriothesley had said to her once. "One would think you had vowed yourself to some saint—some order."

She remembered those words now, and was dwelling upon them with a half-regretful feeling that she had not been so vowed in her earliest infancy, when she looked up and saw Wriothesley push aside the heavy velvet curtains and come towards her.

"Well, you see I have come back?" he said, with a rather awkward laugh.

She sprang to her feet, and stood looking at him with parted lips and breath that came and went with a glad haste.

The melancholy disappeared from her eyes, and with a movement of frank and childish pleasure she held out both hands to him.

"Why," she said—"why——"

And that was all. There was no real meaning in the foolish word, and yet a world of meaning.

He did not dare to read it as it was, or he would have clasped her to his heart and prevented many a sorrowful after-hour; he only took her hands, and bent over them and kissed them warmly twice.

He was in his hunting things, and was rather splashed about the boots; but he looked very big and strong and handsome; and a little sense of possessive gladness

warmed her.

He was here at least, no matter how things went—no other woman could call him husband.

He was smiling, as if pleased with his reception, and the patch of mud that adorned the tip of his left ear did not in her opinion detract from his appearance. She would have given anything to be able to stand on tiptoe and rub it off however; but she felt that she could not do it without a consciousness that would have rendered the act unpardonably awkward.

She withdrew her hands, and sat down once more in her chair. Wriothesley drew up another, and seated himself opposite to her on the hearthrug.

Both looked hard at the fire, as though intent on warming themselves, and altogether it was a veritable Darby-and-Joan sort of a picture, from a superficial glance at it.

But already the awkwardness she so dreaded was descending upon them, and that first kind touch of nature was dying beneath an irrepressible restraint.

"I did not know you were here—in the country," she said at last, in a rather uncertain tone.

"I suppose not. I ran down to the Carringtons' yesterday, and, after a capital run to-day, found myself close to the Grange; so I thought I would look in for a moment to see how you and Cicely were getting on."

He spoke with quite a severe assumption of indifference, and naturally it angered her.

"It was good of you," she said, with a little icy smile. "But how foolish to come so late! How will you get back in time for their dinner? It is quite a quarter-past eight I should think, now."

He pulled out his watch and looked at it.

"By Jove, so it is! I expect I had better be on the move again," he said; but he did not rise from his seat.

"If you will dine here," she began very coldly.

"Oh, no, thanks, not for the world! They will be expecting me at Carringtons'. It—er—isn't much of a ride there, and they don't dine to-night till nine."

"It is quite ten miles!" she said quite severely.

"I suppose you want to get rid of me"—rising at last, with a short laugh. "Well, I'm glad to have seen you looking so well and"—emphatically—"so happy! Good-night;" and he held out his white hand.

"You are wrong; I shouldn't mind if you sat there all night," she said quickly; "and at least you will let me give you a cup of tea."

She touched the bell near her, and when a servant entered gave him some directions.

"As to my looking well and happy," she said resentfully—"did you wish it otherwise? And don't you think you are looking very well yourself?"

Too well, she told herself as she watched him through the shadows. If he had looked a little pulled down, she could have felt in a degree more amiable towards him; but to sneer at her for her good looks, when he himself was the very personification of health and spirits, was just a little too bad.

"I never felt better certainly," replied he coolly.

After this there was a considerable pause. Wriothesley, leaning forward on his seat, with his elbow on his knee and his hand stroking his moustache, stared moodily into the fire; Marvel, finding a tray placed ready for her, busied herself pouring out a cup of tea.

"Do you take sugar?" she asked, more as a means of breaking the unpleasant silence than from a want of knowledge.

"Good heavens—we have been married for a year and a half, and don't you know that yet?" said he, with unreasonable irritation.

"You do?"—waiting with sugar-tongs upraised.

"I do!"

"Here is your tea," she said a second later, standing beside him, tall and pale and slender in the fire-beams.

"Thank you."

He started slightly, not knowing she was so near, and took the cup from her, and placed it on the rug at his feet.

"How strange you look in that white gown!" he said. "Like a bride or a dead girl! Did I speak roughly to you? I don't know why it is that one so soft and young and pale as you can have such a power to irritate me. I am always hurting you, it seems to me. That night we were last together—you remember? I have been sorry about that many times. I would have written saying so; but I could not be sure that you would care. Would you?"

He took the little slim hand that hung by her side and that was covered with rings—she loved them for their beauty, as a child might—and pressed it gently.

He waited eagerly for her answer—with such a decided eagerness indeed that it awoke in her one of those strange perverse moods to which poor human nature is ever heir.

"Not much," she said, with a mutinous, if lovely, glance at him sideways from her expressive eyes.

"Ah!" said he.

He let her hand go, and took up his cup and drank his tea hurriedly. He was bitterly offended.

He took no more notice of her, as she stood, frightened now, and grieved for her hardness, but, pushing back his chair, straightened himself as a man will before taking his departure.

"Please tell Cicely I am sorry not to have seen her; but I fear I cannot afford another moment. Good-night—good-bye!"

"Not good-bye!" faltered she. "You are so close to us, and—— Fulke"—in a very small voice—"I didn't mean that: I should have cared!"

"Is that the truth, my dear," said he sadly; "or was that other answer? Who shall say?"

He raised her face with his hand, and looked at it earnestly in the bright firelight.

"Oh, do believe what I now say!" entreated she, in a choking tone. "I don't know why I said——"

"Well, I'll try," said he; and he stooped and kissed her cheek, and a moment later was gone.

Almost as he left Cicely entered the room by another door.

"What are you doing here, you foolish person, in the dark, and all by yourself? I've sought you 'upstairs and downstairs, and in my lady's chamber,' all to no avail. Come out of this Cimmerian gloom into the higher lights. The others are all in the rose room."

"I have not been so much alone as I seem; I have been giving Fulke his tea."

"Fulke!"

She feigned her surprise very well, the fact being that she knew of Wriothesley's intended visit to the Carringtons, and was now only a little amused that he should have put in an appearance at the Grange quite so soon. It augured well, she thought for Marvel's future.

"Bad halfpennies are always safe to turn up again," she said, with a tilt of her pretty nose—of late she had taken to abusing Wriothesley. "One might have known he would not leave us long in undisturbed peace. Did you have tea with him?"—peering into the second cup. "Poof, what madness to chance the spoiling of a good dinner for the sake of showing courtesy to one who—— Well, at all events, I hope you had a long spoon; when one sups with the demon, one——"

"Fulke is not exactly a demon," said Marvel, a touch of reproach in her manner.

"True—he'd be more endurable if he were; the lukewarm ones of the earth—the half and-halfs—are the truly contemptible. As he happens to be in the neighborhood however, I suppose I had better write and ask him to reconsider his refusal to lend us the light of his countenance for a week or two—eh?"

"As you will," said Marvel, with studious indifference.

"As you will rather! I thought you were anxious to prove to your friends that you felt no emotion at seeing him and Mrs. Scarlett en tete-a-tete every day and all day long? However, if you object to his coming, why, say so, dearest child, and your wish shall be law! Not for worlds would I ask him here if his coming were likely to cause you any unpleasantness."

Her eyes were laughing, and Marvel knew she was insincere in her sympathetic protestations.

"It will not cause me unpleasantness," she said demurely; whereupon Cicely laughed aloud.

"You are a hypocrite!" she said. "Take care lest I punish you by withholding that invitation I spoke of."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

EVEN now, well into the middle of boisterous March as was, the weather still maintained a smiling face. This day was almost warm if one contrasted it with one of a fortnight before; there was a perfume of primroses in the air, and delicate fern-fronds were beginning to peep in shaded corners of the shady woods.

Mrs. Verulam, who had disposed of most of her guests by sending the women to look after the men, who had gone shooting in the early part of the morning, stood at the window of her summer parlor, and at last, emboldened by the sweetness of the view without, flung the casement wide and leaned out to enjoy the keen flower-scented air.

The wind that had howled all night was now dead; it had dropped perhaps behind the great purple-tinted hills beyond that overhung the placid ocean, and

> "Only there sighed from the pine-tops
> A music of sea far away."

It was a delightful day, she told herself; and the sense that she was alone to enjoy it rather added to its charm.

She was tired of entertaining people, she thought, and for once to be able to sit silently and drink in the cool freshness of this king of days was a real joy.

Just as she had come to this conclusion she heard a step behind her; she turned impatiently, to find herself face with Sir George Townsend.

Good heavens—was she never to escape this man? She threw up her hands with quite a pathetic appeal.

"You—is it to be always you?" she said, in a tone of despair.

"Well, I hope so!" replied he. "What did you expect—that I should turn into somebody else? You wouldn't like me to do a trick like that, would you? A conjurer may be a most agreeable person, I've no doubt, but he is not the sort of creature with whom you would like to link your fate—eh?"

"That is quite a remarkable speech"—coldly—"you surely don't expect me to follow it! What I want to know only is why you are not at Lydon Spinney with the others?"

"I was afraid to trust myself with a gun when Castlerock was of the party. I felt it would be certain to go off of its own accord the moment the muzzle was pointed in his direction; and I'm not sure the time for such an act is ripe. By-the-by, as we are on the subject, you may as well tell me now when I am to blossom into the full-blown murderer?"

Lord Castlerock, who was staying at Grangemore, had been very assiduous in his attentions to its pretty mistress for the past ten days; and, though Sir George was by no means jealous of him, he thought it as well to let her know that he was not blind to his meaning, and that, in fact, he quite understood all about it.

"Never, I hope," she said, looking back at him from the open window—a window that framed her in and made a pretty picture of her in her furs and laces. "You are quite obnoxious enough as you are."

"Nevertheless I wait only to hear you name your wedding-day with Castlerock to fall upon him and hack him in pieces."

"You will be free from crime of that sort for a long time if you wait to hear that."

"You cannot deny however that he intends prostrating himself at your feet at the earliest opportunity; I saw it in his eye all to-day and yesterday. And there is Bellingham also—he is going the same road."

"I shouldn't care if there were twenty of them all travelling together. At least they will have the grace to take their 'No' and have done with it"—this with a glance of scorn. "It is very foolish of them, no doubt, but it will not make me uncomfortable."

"It will, I think; to turn away twenty broken-hearted men one after the other will be a wearying of the flesh to you. Now, if you would marry me, you see, there would be an end of all that sort of thing."

"And the commencement of a worse! Besides"—impatiently—"have I not just told you—only you will never listen to a word I say—that I have no objection to men making themselves ridiculous about me? They are sure to do it about something or other, so it may just as well be me; and it adds a little zest to one's life. Now, if I were mad enough to marry you or any one, all that would be at an end."

"Why should it? I'll bind myself in the settlements to propose to you regularly on the first Monday in every month, and then you won't have anything to regret."

"Pshaw!" said she, rising abruptly, as if disgusted with his frivolity.

"Won't it do?" Every Monday in every week then? There—that's a noble offer, if you like!"

She stepped out on to the verandah.

"When people cannot talk sense, they should not talk at all," she said, and moved away from him past the creepers that clung to the balustrades to the most distant seat that the sheltered verandah held.

He instantly picked up a low American cane chair, and, dragging it leisurely behind him, came up to her and seated himself as close to her as circumstances would permit, with all the air of one who was sitting down for a nice long cosy chat.

"Now that is one of the many points on which we are both so entirely agreed," he said comfortably; "and that is why I am always so careful to talk nothing but the severest sense."

No answer.

"Well, and when am I to polish off Castlerock?" he asked presently.

"My dear friend, if you must talk your usual inanities, please let them be in English that may be 'understanded of the people.'"

"As you despise my flowers of speech, so be it. When, then, are you to marry Castlerock?"

"Nonsense! You should know me a little too well for that. What on earth should I do with Castlerock? Why should I, who have determined not to risk my happiness a second time, marry a great, stupid—er—podgy sort of man?"

"'Podgy'—that is an excellent word," said he reflectively, "for Castlerock. Now, if you object to podginess, why not marry me? I am long and lank and lean enough in all conscience, to suit the most esthetic taste. And, as for stupidity, if you really have a dislike to that, which raises you far about your fellows—why, there you are!" throwing out his hands expansively. "All the world knows what a brilliant creature I am."

"It is sufficient for me what I know of you," replied she coolly; and then she murmured some little speech that had the word "obstinate" in it, and another word too. "I am not going to marry you either," she said presently.

"Well, perhaps not just this moment," said he pleasantly; "the day is rather far advanced."

He drew a little nearer to her, and watched the rapid movement of her fingers for a minute or so.

"What are you doing?" he asked curiously.

"Knitting, or at least trying to"—impatiently—"but how can I remember the stitches when you talk so much? It is a new pattern, and still puzzles me. Do—do try to be silent, if only for a little while!"

"I shall be silent for ever after if you will only have me; but, so long as you keep on refusing me, I must of course go on asking you."

"I wonder you aren't ashamed!" exclaimed she suddenly, laying down her work to gaze at him with open scorn.

"Of what?"

"Of going on like that."

"Like what?"

"A spoiled child asking for a sugar-plum it mustn't have."

"I am glad you regard yourself in such a pleasant light; though 'sugar-plum,' I confess, is not the word I should have applied to you."

"I did not mean it for myself"—blushing faintly—"I was merely——"

"Drawing a little figure for my instruction? I know; but now 'bitters' would be nearer to it—eh? That is a name which would suit you better; and at all events it would suit me better—it is more stimulating, not so nauseating. And—why can't I have my bitters?"

Here, Mrs. Verulam maintaining a dignified silence, Sir George edged a little nearer to her still.

"That is abominable work you are doing," he said, fixing his eye-glass firmly in his eye and staring at the work in question over her shoulder with a critical gaze. "One, two, three; one, two, three; one, two, three, four. Why, any one would think you were learning the piano all over again?"

"I am learning nothing!" cried she in despair, laying down the knitting hopelessly on her knee and turning on him a wrathful countenance. "You have put me out now irretrievably with your silly counting. I really wish you would either go away altogether—that would be far the best plan—or else be quiet for even a short while."

"I have just told you"—serenely—"that you have only to say one little word, and I will be quiet for ever."

Mrs. Verulam pushed back her chair and rose majestically to her feet; there was the light of a stern resolve upon her brow.

"George, you have conquered!" she said, in a low but awe-inspiring voice. "I will marry you, if only to be revenged upon you."

Sir George got up instantly; he stretched out his long sinewy arms and gave himself a mighty shake; a smile illumined his melancholy countenance.

"It would have saved a considerable deal of valuable time and argument if you had come to that wise decision two years ago," he said.

"Mark my words however—you will live to rue this day."

"If I do, I'll tell you about it. In the meantime I have your promise?"

"Yes; I hope"—petulantly, whilst trying not to smile—"you are satisfied now?"

"I am the happiest man on earth. Come"—tucking his arm within hers—"let us go for a stroll round the garden."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE DAY AND THE WEEK.—The week existed as a civil institution among the Semitic nations from the earliest times. It was probably first instituted as a broad subdivision of the lunar month, corresponding to the four quarters of the moon, or about seven and three-eighth days. The Hindus, Persians, Chaldeans, and Assyrians had such a division, but only the Jews, as far as we know, attached a religious signification to the seventh day. It is known that the Egyptians from a very early time counted seven periodical days, and named them according to the seven planets.

This nomenclature of the days, together with the seven-day division itself, was imported from Alexandria to Greece. The Greeks had, previous to this time, divided their months into decades, periods of ten days each. The week of seven days was adopted by the Romans about the time of Christ.

Before this the Romans had counted their time by eight days, and the eighth day was a sort of holiday—a day on which country people were in the habit of coming to the towns to transact business and to inquire after public news.

The readiness with which the seven-day division and the planetary names of the days were adopted by the Romans was probably owing to the rapid spread of interest in Egyptian astrology among the people. In the ancient Brahminical astronomy, the week is also recognized, and the names of the days are from the same planets and in the same order as those in use by the ancient Egyptians; but the week began with them with the day of Venus or Friday.

The Egyptian week began—as that of the Hebrews did—on Saturday. The week of the Chinese and Thibetans has but five days, which are named after the five elements—iron, wood, water, feathers, and earth.

But the Chinese have no Sabbath or rest-day, and seem to have no conception of the need or desirability of such a day. At the present time the Mohammedans keep Friday as their rest-day or Sabbath, the Jews, and a few minor Christian sects, observe Saturday; while the rest of the civilized world distinguish Sunday from the other days as a time for rest or pleasure.

THE RIGHT WAY.—"Out of the millions of persons who stamp letters daily but few know the way to do the 'licking,'" remarked the stamp purveyor at the post office, yesterday. "Which is the right way, Ah!?" queried a listener. "Why, the envelope ought to be licked, not the stamp. If you lick the envelope and then apply the stamp it will stick, sure. If you lick the stamp you are liable to carry away all the mucilage on your tongue, or so much that the stamp will fall off. Many a letter has reached the Dead Letter Office because the sender licked the stamp instead of the envelope."

THE other day Mrs. Snipkins, being unwell, sent for a medical man and declared that she was poisoned, and that Mr. Snipkins did it. "I didn't do it," shouted Snipkins. "It's all gammon; she isn't poisoned. Prove it, doctor; open her on the spot; I've no objection."

WITHOUT A THORN.

BY F. M.

'Tis happiness to lie awake
And watch the coming dawn
That silently proclaims to all,
"Another day is born."

But with the rose there is a thorn,
Which makes a man grow thin;
It is to hear, "There, John, get up
And let the milkman in."

Foiled By A Woman.

BY BERYL.

CHAPTER I.

I FELT rather alarmed when Mr. Philip Mervyn suddenly put his head out of the inner office, and called out my name.

I was only a junior clerk in the employment of Messrs. Mervyn Brothers; and old Mogga, who had been with them for years, was always their mouthpiece to us juniors. Mogga pushed his spectacles up to his forehead in his surprise when Mr. Philip opened the door and called me.

"Mr. Adams, step this way, if you please," said my employer, in the sharp incisive tones we all knew so well.

The other fellows looked at me, half in pity, as I rose from my desk. Was I going to be reprimanded, perhaps dismissed?

I had been very late in arriving that morning, and Mr. Philip Mervyn was a martinet.

"Take a seat," said Mr. Philip courteously—a small, spare, shrewd-looking man, with keen bright eyes. Mr. Mervyn, the elder brother, was stout and pompous, and rather dull, but he creditably supported the role of unflagging respectability; he won the hearts and confidence of clients, while Mr. Philip did their business.

Together, they were a pair of upright honorable men, family solicitors of long standing and excellent repute.

In the solemn silence of the inner office, with its japanned deed-boxes lining the walls, sat Mr. Mervyn, an anxious look on his usually benign countenance.

Mr. Philip had taken up a position near the window.

"Sit down," said Mr. Philip, with a wave of the hand.

Both tone and gesture told me I had not been summoned thither to be reprimanded, and, with a sigh of relief, I seated myself.

"Can you speak German, Mr. Adams?" asked Mr. Philip, while Mr. Mervyn leaned back in his arm-chair, and twirled the slender cord attached to his gold-rimmed eyeglasses round his thumb.

"Yes; I speak it fairly well."

"And you understand it?" asked the elder partner judicially.

"Yes," I replied.

"Do you also understand French?" asked Mr. Philip abruptly.

"No, sir," I replied turning towards him.

The brothers looked at each other for an instant.

"If he speaks German, and is willing to undertake the commission, that is enough," said Mr. Philip to his brother. "Heffiner is German, and it is with Heffiner he has to do."

Mr. Mervyn waved his hand in assent, and then Mr. Philip walked forward to the table, where the faint light from the shaded desk-lamps fell full upon his face.

"Mr. Adams," he began abruptly, "you have been with us now five years, and I think I am expressing my brother's sentiments, as well as my own, when I say that, after Mogga, we place more confidence in your integrity than in that of any other gentleman in our office."

I bowed, overpowered by such condescending words from Mr. Philip, of all people.

"Are you prepared to undertake a commission of importance for us?"

"Yes," I replied; "I am ready to do anything that you command."

"I would go myself," said Mr. Philip, "only I cannot leave home just at present."

His young wife was dangerously ill, I knew, so I could understand the look of pain that crossed his face.

"My brother naturally could not undertake the journey, and Mogga is of no use in a case like this. Besides, the affair wants a young man with all his wits about him. There is no danger in the matter, but very grave responsibility. Are you prepared to accept that responsibility, Mr. Adams?"

"Perfectly, sir," I answered quietly. "I feel honored that you have chosen me to serve your interests."

"You shall not be the loser, Mr. Adams," remarked the elder partner pompously. "The business is one of importance——"

"It does not concern Mr. Adams to know what the business is, Joseph," interrupted the younger brother sharply. "Our sending him on it must be its sole guarantee of honesty, if he require one. In the interest of our client, we can tell him nothing of the affair, more than of the part we require him to take in it. We want you," he said, turning to me, "to leave London to-morrow morning. See, here is a Bradshaw, with your whole course marked out in red ink. Travel without delay to Lausanne in Switzerland. You will find at this address"—tendering me a sealed envelope—"a German gentleman named Heffiner. He will give you a small case; you will hand him this receipt with our signature affixed. Here, on this line, you will kindly sign your own name. Then return immediately to England. The case which you will receive from Herr Heffiner will contain jewels, chiefly diamonds, to the value of about seventy thousand pounds. Here is a list. Before signing the receipt, Herr Heffiner will open the case, and you will please carefully go over each item it contains, with the list in your hand, checking them off as you go along. This formality is merely for your own sake, for Herr Heffiner is a gentleman in whom we place the most absolute confidence. Do you accept the responsibility of bringing these jewels safely to us here?"

"Yes," I said unhesitatingly.

"There is no danger, as I said before—only responsibility."

"I accept the responsibility."

"Good," said Mr. Philip.

And so the matter ended—or rather, so it began.

The list and the receipt for Herr Heffiner I placed within my pocket-book, and then Mr. Philip took twenty sovereigns from a drawer, and handed them to me.

"English gold is current everywhere," he remarked.

Then, as I was about to withdraw, he called me back.

"Adams," he said, looking at me searchingly, and speaking in an earnest friendly tone, as a man to man, and not as employer to servant—"Adams, this is a grave charge, and some might say a terrible temptation, for us elder men to place a young fellow like you within the reach of; but we trust you. If you fail us, if you deceive us, if those jewels are lost or stolen, we shall be ruined men; but you will be worse than ruined—you will be disgraced."

"Trust me, sir, I shall do my best. If those jewels are lost while in my charge, my life will be lost too."

"We do trust you," said Mr. Philip, for the first time in his life offering me his hand.

Mr. Mervyn followed suit, and then I left.

I arrived at Lausanne at eleven o'clock on a February morning. The winter had been unusually severe, and snow lay thickly everywhere.

My business with Herr Heffiner was quickly transacted on my finding that worthy Teuton, and presenting him with my credentials.

Never had such a wealth of dazzling magnificence burst upon my vision as when that jewel-case lay open on Herr Heffiner's table, and diamonds, emeralds, opals, rubies, pearls, lay strewed before me, to be gone over and checked on my list. Herr Heffiner smiled at my surprise.

"They are then right?" he asked blandly. "You have your number? So many diamond stars, so many emerald necklaces? Well, then, my friend, all is right. Ah, the receipt, duly signed by my very good friends, Mervyn Brothers, and now signed again, on their behalf, by you, Herr Adams? All is well!"

"I shall say good-bye now; I am anxious to be off at once," I said, as he looked the case, which was remarkably small, considering the value of the contents, and handed me the key.

"Ah, my friend, you have then a special train to take you to Paris? No? Then how get you there? The evening mail leaves not here until five o'clock."

Five o'clock! I was rather taken aback. It was but a little past noon now. I looked from the large white face of the clock to the large red face of Herr Heffiner.

"Come with me to my home, and my good wife shall give you to eat. A friend of Mervyn Brothers is my friend likewise, I assure you! Ah, the jewels! You look at them as to say, what shall become of them? See, my friend, I shall replace them here in this private drawer, whence you saw me take them. You have the key of the jewel-case, and can keep your receipt, and look the list over once more before you depart, if that will please you."

"I am sure that will not be necessary," I answered, rather shamefacedly. "My employers spoke of Herr Heffiner in a way which leaves me no room to doubt him."

"Still, business is business. Here, put the case in here. We will go over the jewels again on our return from dinner."

Frau Heffiner was a comely woman, with many olive-branches clinging to her skirts, as she came forward to greet her husband.

They lived in a suite of rooms facing the lake.

I had never been abroad before, but I had often heard Swiss scenery praised beyond measure. I thought little of it on this my first experience, looking down at the cold ink-black stretch of water, with snow reaching to its very edge, and the hills beyond half-lost in the vapory clouds that were resting upon them.

If I was slightly disappointed with the view from the window, however, the sumptuous repast provided by the genial Frau Heffiner left nothing to be desired, and I enjoyed the meal with all the zest of a hungry traveler.

I felt so touched by the hospitality and kindliness shown me by these good people that I really did not like to re-open the jewel-case in Herr Heffiner's private office, and go through the list again; but he insisted I should do so, as much for his sake as my own, he said.

To me the act seemed like gross suspicion of the worthy gentleman whose hospitality I had just received.

I placed the case of jewels in the small hand-bag I carried, and, bidding farewell to the good-natured German, drove to the railway-station.

I ensconced myself in the corner of a railway-car, the precious bag on the seat opposite to me. A young lady entered the car, and seated herself near the other window.

A number of people, apparently friends come to see her off, stood on the platform, and she chatted with these in an animated manner.

They were speaking in French. She was a tall elegant girl, with a slight graceful figure; she wore a well-cut Ulster coat and a fur cape. A small closely-fitting cloth cap crowned her light brown curly hair, and the slender foot that peeped from beneath the hem of her dress was daintily shod in a serviceable winter boot.

She did not at all realize my idea of what a Frenchwoman should be. Her color was too healthy, her waist not of a sufficiently wasplike description, and her foot was long and slender.

Amidst many voluble farewells, and much waving of hands and handkerchiefs from her friends on the platform, the train moved slowly out of the station. We traveled on for many long weary miles amidst the snow landscape, and at last the dreary winter twilight commenced to close in.

My companion laid down her book, and, leaning her cheek upon her hand, looked out over the cold uninviting country we were passing through.

Presently a railway official entered the car. The young lady had a brief colloquy with him; then he came on to me, and uttered some words I could not understand.

I looked helplessly at him. He spoke again, with visible impatience. Then the young lady in the corner of the car came smilingly to the rescue.

"He wants to see your ticket," she said, in pure English, never so melodious in my ears as then.

"Oh!" I ejaculated shamefacedly, thinking I might have guessed as much, and producing the piece of pasteboard. Then the man unlocked the door on my side of the car, and, swinging himself out on to the step, disappeared.

"Thank you very much," I said, turning to the young lady, and raising my hat. "I do not know French. How well you speak it! I thought you were French ever since we left Lausanne."

"No, I am English," she replied, as she deftly unfastened her rug-strap and wrapped herself in a shawl. "It is getting very cold," she remarked.

"It will be colder farther on," I replied. "The snow was lying thickly on the mountains as I crossed this morning. There was some fear that the line would be blocked before night. I am sure I hope not. It has not snowed—at least, not at Lausanne—since I arrived there this morning."

"This morning," she said, in evident surprise—"and you are leaving it now!"

"I am on my way to London," I answered, feeling what an utter fool I was to give so much information about myself and my movements to a perfect stranger.

She relapsed into silence, and on we went in the ever-deepening twilight, upwards through the winding Jura passes, now stealing across a long bridge from point to point, with an angry yellow torrent rolling in the chasm beneath, now curving round the mountain side, with the serried ranks of pines beneath and above us—the snow thick on all.

After nightfall we approached the frontier. My companion roused herself, and looked at me good-naturedly.

"Perhaps I can help you with the customs officers," she said politely, "as you do not speak French."

The customs officers! This was a danger of which I had never thought, and a contingency of which neither Mr. Mervyn nor Herr Heffiner had spoken. I felt my blood run cold.

How could I ever pass these splendid jewels without comment, search, perhaps imprisonment, it might be forfeiture? I gazed at the young lady in helpless dismay.

"The customs officers!" I stammered, feeling my face growing pale. "Do they examine everything?"

"Well, not the large luggage," she explained—"that is, if you have registered it through. I registered mine to Charing Cross, so it will not be examined until I reach there. But here, on the frontier, they look into personal luggage, rug-straps, bags, and things of that kind."

I gazed at my bag. What was I to do?

"Unless you have cigars, or chocolate, or Swiss jewelry," she said, smiling, "you need not be alarmed."

"And, if I had any of those things," I asked, "what would happen?"

"The trifling things they would simply confiscate," she replied, still smiling; "but with anything of greater value, they would probably detain the person, until they had inquired into the matter."

This was not so hopeless, except that I could in no wise explain my position to these foreign officers.

Rapidly I made up my mind that, should I be detained by the custom-house people, I would telegraph to Herr Heffiner to come to me at once, and get me out of the scrape.

"Their examination of hand-bags is often superficial," the young lady went on, looking at me curiously. "You need not be alarmed, if you put the contraband things well down at the bottom of your bag, and do not look anxious. If you do, they will certainly search you closely."

What a splendid diplomatist I was! Already this girl had seen I had something to conceal, and fathomed my uneasiness respecting it.

Now, though rather late in the day, I attempted to put a bold face on the matter, and laughed as I answered her—

"I shall follow your advice. I am sure it is sound. Ladies are proverbially clever smugglers!"

The train drew up at Vallorbes, the frontier-station, and we travelers were all bundled out into the cold snow, with our hand-bags, and baskets, and straps.

In the confusion, I lost sight of my young lady friend. I stood in the long cold hall, close by my precious bag, waiting for the officials to examine it, my pulses wildly throbbing with suspense and fear.

A porter came along the room, carrying a bag and a roll of shawls, and deposited them close by my luggage.

Then the young lady herself appeared, smiling, as she waited, with the calm ease of an old traveler, for the douanier.

"We stop half an hour here," she said, on recognizing me, "and there is a refreshment-room at the other side of the station. As you are a stranger, I thought you might like to know."

I thanked her stammeringly. The officer reached her at last, made a pretence of looking into the bag, asked her a few questions in French, and then, marking it with a piece of chalk he carried, turned to speak to another douanier, who, coming up behind him, claimed his attention.

"They ask if you have anything to declare," the young lady said to me, as she signed to the porter to take her luggage away. "That means, if you have anything contraband or against rules."

And, with a bright smile, she left me. I watched her graceful erect figure along the hall and then the douanier tapped me sharply on the shoulder.

Remembering what she had said about not appearing alarmed, I pushed my bag forward across the counter.

He opened it, and looked in. A few papers, a cigar-case, a Bradshaw, met his eye. Pausing, with the bag still open between his hands, he asked me a question.

I did not understand it; "Declarer" however was the last word; so I mustered all the French I knew, and replied—

"Non, monsieur."

He closed the bag, put some cabalistic sign in chalk upon it, and passed on.

I breathed freely, as I left the hall with the precious burden in my hand. At the door a man ran up against me, and jostled me rudely.

"Pardon, monsieur!" he cried breathlessly, looking at me as he spoke.

Perhaps he was only an alarmed traveler, looking wildly after his luggage; but there was something repellent in the man's face.

I crossed the line to where the brightly-lighted windows of the refreshment-rooms gleamed invitingly; I went in, ordered some coffee, and then looked about me.

The young lady was nowhere to be seen; but at the table with me was a big surly-looking man, in a great fur-lined coat, and with a fur cap drawn down over his eyes.

I asked him politely to pass me the sugar; but he did not seem to hear, so I stood up and got it myself.

At the door, as I went out, I again encountered the man I had met before; he did not jostle me this time, but drew aside to let me pass out, still looking sharply at me.

I did not again catch sight of the young lady, until just before the train moved off. I saw her getting into the car, where the two men—the one who had jostled me, and the one in the fur coat—were already ensconced.

She looked wistfully up and down the line of cars, as though she would make some other choice if there were time; but the car-doors were being closed, and the guard was coming briskly along the platform.

Remembering the face of the man who had knocked up against me, I felt I should not like to be shut up alone with him for the night.

Then I lighted a cigar, and forgot all about him. I was determined not to sleep while that precious bag was in my possession, so I drew back the curtain, and looked out of the window.

We had left the mountain-passes far behind, and were speeding along the flat pasture-lands and vineyards of France. Here and there in the darkness, the lights of some village or town twinkled across the snow.

Overhead, the sky looked as black as a pall, unrelieved by so much as one small glimmering ray of starlight.

It was late when the train reached Dijon. The passengers poured out from the cars and sleeping-cars to the refreshment-rooms. I, with my precious bag, made my way with the throng, and asked for coffee.

I was beginning to feel drowsy, and sleep must be warded off at any cost until my mission was accomplished, and the jewels were delivered into Messrs. Mervyn's hands.

As I was standing by the counter, waiting for my coffee, a slip of paper was stealthily pressed into my hand. I looked round very quickly, but I could see no one who was likely to have given me the paper.

A stream of cross, cold, and weary voyagers was flowing in at the open doors, every man and woman of them intent on his or her own miseries, and the alleviation thereof.

I opened the paper as I sipped my coffee. Upon the fly-leaf of a book a few lines were tremblingly traced in pencil. I had to move nearer to the gas to decipher the writing.

"This is life or death. I traveled from Lausanne with you. Come to the car where I am, and stay there. Pretend you are my brother."

Only this—no more. Of course I knew who had written those faltering lines. I jumped to a hasty conclusion.

One of those villains in the car with that poor girl had doubtless made himself offensive to her, and she now threw herself upon my protection.

My blood boiled to think of the alarm she must have been suffering during those lonely hours. She, the self-reliant young woman, who had looked upon me as a helpless idiot, and had stooped to aid me, now threw herself upon my chivalry, as a man and a gentleman, to come to her assistance, and give her the benefit of my protection.

As I finished reading the unevenly-written words on the scrap of paper, I found there was but little time to sip the hot coffee before me; and also that standing close by my side, staring at me, was the man who had jostled me at Vallorbes.

I could see his face better now, in the brilliantly-lighted refreshment-room—a narrow crafty face, with a faint smile playing about the thin lips—his hair and eyes coal-black, and his cheeks and chin having a bluish tinge which denoted that his last shaving had not been of very recent date.

I could not help noticing the insolent scrutiny of his bold keen eyes, so I turned to him, and made some casual remark, speaking of course in English. Something impelled me to show the man that I did not seek to avoid him.

He replied in fluent English enough, but with a perceptible foreign accent. He left the refreshment-room before I did, raising his hat to me as he went. I contented myself with a nod in response.

The girl was sitting at the window of her compartment, eagerly looking out. I sauntered up to her, and, as I did so, she threw open the door with an air of relief.

"Have you room for me?" I asked, in as careless a manner as I could possibly assume.

Looking past her into the car, I saw the big man in the fur coat huddled up in one corner, apparently asleep; while the dark man had just entered the car, and was settling himself in the other window-seat.

"Are you tired of smoking?" she asked, making room for me as I stepped into the car.

"Yes; I thought you might be rather lonely, so I came to look after you. Do you like this car?" I asked her pointedly, so that she might have an opportunity of leaving it if she wished.

"Yes. I am not like you," she said; "I like staying in one car. How often have you changed since we left Vallorbes?"

"Not until now," I replied, trying to adopt the same easy tone as that in which she spoke.

I could see that the dark man in the farther corner seemed to be thoroughly amazed at the turn things had taken, and he gave his slumbering companion a furtive kick or two, which that portly individual steadfastly disregarded.

"Did you sleep at all?" she asked.

"No. Did you?"

"Yes, now and again; but I am too tired to sleep. Won't it be delightful to be at home again to-morrow evening, George?"

George was my name. How did she know that? I felt somewhat astonished—so much so that I did not answer.

"Do you think they will come to Charing Cross to meet us?" she went on, with a pleading look in her eyes that spurred me to bestir myself, and take my part in the comedy that was being played.

The dark man kicked the big man so fiercely at this juncture that, with a growl, he roused himself.

The two began to converse together in low tones; but I could see by my companion's face that she was intently listening to every word they said, even while she appeared to attend to my remarks.

"I don't know," I answered carelessly. "Jack might come, if he happened to be in a good humor; but I don't think any of the others will trouble themselves." Jack was my youngest brother.

"Mother is sure to come," she said.

I could not help smiling. It would create a considerable sensation at Charing Cross, I thought, if my mother did come to meet me, seeing she had been dead fifteen years.

"And Mary will also," she continued dreamily, but with her face turned towards the two men, so that they might overhear her.

They looked at each other questioningly, I noticed; and then the younger man set himself to stare deliberately at me, while the man in the fur coat turned his back on us, looking out into the darkness.

"Yes, Mary will be sure to come," I said. "It will be jolly to be home again. How long have we been in Switzerland?"

"Two months last Monday," she answered.

Again the dark young man leaned forward, and said something in an unknown tongue to the other. His companion answered with a heavy sigh and a wave of the hand.

The girl opposite to me smiled for the first time since I entered the car.

"The next time we come abroad, it shall be in the summer," I said. "This snow weather is hateful for traveling."

"Yes; one wants such a lot of luggage. It was a capital plan of yours to register all ours to Charing Cross. We have all we want in these bags, and so had no trouble on the frontier. By the way, how did you manage at Vallorbes? Did they overlook that case of surgical instruments which you have in your bag? I was afraid they would be confiscated, as they are all new."

"They did not notice them at all," I replied, laying my hand upon my bag.

"Your bag was so heavy, I felt certain they would pounce upon them at once."

A sudden horrible fear smote me. Had I, idiot that I was, walked into a trap laid for me by this girl and these men? Was I to be attacked, robbed, murdered perhaps, here in the swiftly-rushing train, in the lonely darkness.

My heart beat violently, and I felt for my revolver, determined that mine should not be the only sudden death.

At that moment the train slackened speed, and we glided into a comparatively large station. Now was my time to escape.

I saw the eyes of the girl opposite suddenly dilate with terror; she involuntarily put out her hand towards me.

"Excuse me. I would get out," said the dark man, and she drew back to let him pass.

In the confusion, she leaned forward and gently laid one burning hand upon mine.

"Do not leave me!" she whispered. For Heaven's sake, trust me! I will tell you all when we reach Paris."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A Faithless Fancy.

"YOU know," said a widow, in a voice smothered with sobs, "the dreadful misfortune—" here she applied a delicate cambric handkerchief to her eyes—"the terrible loss——" She could say no more.

Her visitor bowed with an air of respectful sympathy.

"I wish"—continued the widow—"I wish to erect a monument to the memory of my poor husband. I have chosen you to execute the order because you——" Here she paused.

The sculptor bowed again.

"You will understand that I wish this monument to be superb, worthy of the dear companion whom I mourn; proportioned to my——"

She seemed to be getting hysterical. Her visitor handed her a bottle of salts that stood on a little table close at hand.

The lady quickly resumed her instructions.

"Spare no expense. I would willingly consecrate my whole fortune to the honor of his memory."

A pause which the sculptor hesitated to break.

"I should like," said the widow, coming to the point, "a temple, with marble columns, and in the middle, upon a pedestal, his statue."

Here she covered her face.

"I shall do my best to fulfil your wishes, madam," replied the man of art. "I had not, however, the honor of personally knowing the late Mr.——, and his likeness is indispensable to the completion of the design; doubtless you have a portrait which I could take as my guide."

The lady raised her rounded arm and pointed to a magnificent portrait, painted by one of the first artists of the day.

"An admirable painting," said the sculptor. "I need not ask you if the likeness is a good one."

"It is his very image! Life is all that is needed. Ah, if I could but give mine for his!"

And she again burst into sobs.

"I will send for the portrait, madam, and I guarantee that the likeness shall be a faithful one."

"Send for the portrait!" repeated the widow with horror. "You would take from me my only consolation, my only happiness! No. Never!"

"But, madam, I shall only need it for quite a short time."

"A short time! It will be an age to me. How could I live without this dear image? It quite me neither day nor night; I contemplate it without ceasing through my tears. It will never be removed out of this room again, where I intend to pass the remainder of my miserable existence."

The lady worked herself up to such a pitch of excitement with these words that the sculptor rose to ring the bell for assistance.

But she laid a white hand upon his coat-sleeve, and he sat down again.

"Then you will allow me, madam, to come here to take a copy of the portrait, perhaps. Do not be alarmed. I shall not intrude upon your solitude. A single sitting will be sufficient."

The widow agreed to this arrangement, and requested the sculptor to begin to work the next day.

But he had a previous order to execute. She would have smoothed the difficulty with gold; but he stood firm.

"My word is pledged, and I cannot break it," he said; "do not, however, be troubled about the delay. I will work so diligently that the monument shall be finished within a very few months."

And so it was settled.

"You have been witness of my sorrow," were the widow's parting words; "you may imagine how impatient I shall be to see the work completed. Make the greatest haste; spare no expense, and let me have a master-piece."

Several letters passed, in which the lady repeated these injunctions.

At the end of the three months the sculptor returned. He found the widow still in the deepest mourning; but she was less pale, and there was a brightness in her eye, and a slight suspicion of coquetry in the arrangement of her weeds, which attracted his notice.

"Now, madam," he said, "I come for your final instructions."

"Ah, well, I am glad to hear it," replied the lady, with a gracious smile.

"I have nearly completed the statue, and need only one sitting to enable me to catch the likeness. Permit me to enter your private boudoir."

"For what reason?" inquired the widow, with some surprise.

"To see the portrait, madam."

"Oh, it is no longer there; it now hangs in the drawing-room."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; there is a much better light there than in the room where it used to hang."

"Would you like to look at my sketch of the monument?"

"Certainly. How grand it is," she said, examining the drawing. "What exquisite ornaments. Why, it is more like a palace than a tomb."

"Yes: you told me, madam, that it could not be too magnificent. I have tried to fulfill your wishes, and have spared no expense. Here is an estimate of what the monument will cost you when it is completed."

"Dear me!" exclaimed the lady, after glancing at the sum total "It is enormous!"

"You bade me spare nothing——"

"Of course; I wish the thing to be done handsomely. Still, we ought to be rational."

"Well, this is only the first sketch; there is still time to alter your intentions."

"Very good. Suppose, then, we suppress the temple, the columns—all the architecture in short—and content ourselves with a statue. I was too ambitious; the statue will be quite sufficient."

"You shall be obeyed."

"It is decided, then. Nothing but the statue."

A short time after this visit, the sculptor fell ill, and was obliged to discontinue all work, and to follow the advice of a physician and go abroad for a change of air. On his return, after some months' absence, he presented himself again before the lady, who had now been a widow for months.

This time she wore some roses, and the weeds were fast disappearing. The artist brought with him a little plaster mould of the statue, which promised to be a masterpiece.

"What do you think of the likeness, madam?" he asked, with some pride.

"Well, sir, it is certainly flattered. My poor husband was not bad looking, but you have made him a perfect Apollo."

"Indeed. I can correct this by the portrait if you will allow me to see it again. I would by all means give you satisfaction."

"It is scarcely worth while to take so much trouble. A little resemblance, more or less, is of no consequence."

"Pardon me, madam, if I do not agree with you. I plume myself on my correct likenesses."

"If you really wish to give yourself so much extra work I will ring for it," replied the lady, by no means well pleased.

"Do not trouble, madam, to ring. The picture is, I think, in the drawing room; so if you will permit me I will go there."

"It is no longer there," said the widow, ringing the bell. "Robert," she continued, addressing the servant, "bring down the portrait of your late master."

"The one that was taken up into the garret last week, ma'am?"

"Yes."

Just then the door opened and a fashionably dressed young man presented himself, and, walking up to the lady, kissed her hand with a jaunty air, inquiring after her health and well-being with the utmost solicitude.

"Who is that funny little plaster man?" he asked, pointing to the statuette.

"It is the model of a statue for the tomb of my late husband."

"You intend to erect a statue to his memory? Upon my word it is very handsome of you."

"Do you think so?" said the lady.

"Great men are sculptured at full length in marble; but it appears to me—pardon my frankness—that the late Mr.—— was a very ordinary man. In fact, his bust would suffice for his memory," replied the young man.

"Do you wish this, madam?" said the sculptor, not well pleased at the suggestion.

"Yes, I think we will decide upon a bust and nothing more," said the widow, bowing him out.

Two months later the bust arrived just as a gay party descended the hall steps and entered the carriages that awaited them.

The widow was on her way to the altar with the young man who had caused the suppression of her husband's statue, there to swear new vows of fidelity.

Scandal adds that the bust would have been gladly returned; that the newly married couple considered the sculptor's fees most exorbitant; and that it was only after considerable difficulty, and a threat of legal proceedings, that he was at last paid for the time and trouble expended on a faithless woman's fancy.

Scientific and Useful.

PATENT CHECK.—Among the novelties recently patented is one which is ingenious in idea, namely, an arrangement for bankers' checks, or similar documents, in which the position of the signature indicates approximately the amount drawn for.

DEADENING FLOORS.—A new method of deadening floors is to fill the space between a floor and the ceiling below with shavings made incombustible by saturating them in thick whitewash. It is said that this shuts out the heat more effectually than cement.

TOMATO VINEGAR.—A patent has been granted in England for the manufacture of vinegar from tomatoes. The fruit when ripe, or nearly so, is reduced to a pulp and steeped in water for twenty-four hours. The resulting liquor is drawn off, sugar added, and the whole allowed to ferment.

A COMBINED WATCH-CHAIN.—A combined watch-chain, pen, and pencil-holder consists in making the links of the watch-guard mutually telescopic, so that by being made to close up by sliding over or into each other a flexible watch chain is incontinently converted into a rigid pen and pencil-holder.

MATCHES.—A new lucifer match machine promises wonders, according to report. It is surely nothing short of a wonder that, by this mechanism, matches are now being made at the rate of 3000 a minute, and that the quantity is to be doubled by the latest improvement of the apparatus. Then there is a machine already in use whereby match boxes can be turned out complete at the rate of 350 a minute. Accordingly, we may look forward to more matches than ever for a penny.

GRAVEL-AND-COAL-TAR WALKS.—Take two parts of very dry lime rubbish and one part of coal-ashes, also very dry, and both sifted fine. Mix them in a dry place on a dry day, and leave a hole in the middle of the heap, as bricklakers do when making mortar. Into this pour boiling-hot coal-tar, mix, and, when as stiff as mortar, put in three inches thick where the walk is to be. The ground should be dry and beaten smooth; sprinkle over it coarse sand. When cold, pass a light roller over it. In a few days the walk will be solid and waterproof.

Farm and Garden.

THE WHITE BREEDS.—There is a growing preference in favor of the white breeds of fowls, the claim being that it is easier to dress them for market than the dark-plumaged kinds, as the white pin-feathers do not show as readily as is the case with the birds of black plumage, which require careful hand-picking.

TROUGHS.—Horse troughs should be thoroughly washed occasionally, as there is more or less food left over, which in time will become filthy. Should moistened ground food remain in the trough and the weather become somewhat warm it will partially ferment, and in that manner render other food unwholesome.

PLUM TREES.—Plum trees will thrive well in a poultry-yard and be less subject to the attacks of the curculio. The trees will require the usual jarring, however, but the insects will be destroyed by the poultry, thereby lessening the liability of damage the succeeding year. All plum trees should be in poultry-yards.

TREES.—Don't plant big trees in little places; don't smother up your house with trees or spread them broadcast over your grounds. But plant large shade trees along the street or the outskirts of your property, and a specimen group here and there upon your place where shade is needed or good effect demands it. Don't overcrowd.

THE PIG.—The future pig must have more flesh and less fat. It must not be a mere lard keg. It must be fed on flesh-forming foods until grown, and then fattened. It means that more clover, peas, oats, milk and such articles of diet must be used, and less corn. We will then have healthier and more palatable pork, and hog cholera will become a thing of the past.

POULTRY.—The cheapest and best mode of keeping lice out of the poultry-house is to add a quart of kerosene oil to each bucket of strong soap-suds on washing days and thoroughly saturate the floor, walls, roosts, and every portion of the poultry-house, forcing the liquid into the cracks and crevices. It will kill the vermin as soon as it shall touch them, being one of the best insecticides known.

CLOVER.—Clover is one of the best foods that can be grown, and enough should be produced to have an abundance of hay in winter. A ton of clover hay contains thirty-seven pounds of nitrogen and nearly fourteen pounds of phosphoric acid, while corn contains only thirty-three pounds of nitrogen and about the same proportion of phosphoric acid. The only advantage of the corn is that it contains more starch, or fat-producing material.

THE TURNING POINT.—Only one quart of milk per cow for each day may be the turning point between profit and loss in the dairy. As some cows will yield twice as much as others, it becomes the duty of the dairyman to raise his cows and use only those from good milking families. No dairyman can succeed who buys fresh cows to replace those that dry off, as the chances are against him. No cow can be depended upon as a milker until she shall have been tested.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
FOUNDED, A.D. 1821

PHILADELPHIA, MAY 26, 1888.

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The Grand Passion.

Love is such an old, old story, and so much that is good and expressive has been written and sung about it, that we feel rather scared on approaching the subject. But it is one that will bear constant re-inspection; it can never be exhausted; it possesses the secret of perpetual youth; for it plays so important a part in the state of our existence, whether that be one of happiness or unhappiness, that our interest in it can never be abated.

In youth, and later on, what is life to us but a great ocean of love?

On the nature of love, there have been many wise and learned disquisitions; but the only practical solution of the question we can arrive at is, that it is an attachment, a yearning experienced by one person for another; and this yearning, strange to say, seems not to be dependent on any special characteristic of the person loved.

It is a terrible force, as every one knows—one that governs the world—one that is capable of making a human being superlatively happy both in the present and in the future of this life; and on the other hand, one to which many a human being can trace his or her lifelong misery and eventual destruction.

This is a terrible consideration, and one which it is worth our while to pause and think over; for the truth is that we have no control over that force, which, when once aroused, lays us at the mercy of some one else, and makes this other person the arbiter of our fate.

We cannot decide by an effort of the will that we shall love such and such a person, and not fall in love with such and such another person.

This opens a very grave question, one of such serious importance to all of us as to be quite appalling. But are we perfectly helpless in the face of Nature? Does Nature offer us no remedy for this terrible state of things? How can we be considered responsible—how can we be made thus to suffer for what seems so entirely beyond our control?

That is a question often asked, and one which, if we continue merely asking it, will never be answered for us.

Nature deigns not to answer our questions; her laws and methods are continually operating, and we have not to ask, but to learn and act thereby.

If in this case we set ourselves to learn by the experience of others, we shall soon come to see a rent in the cloud—to feel gradually that even in this case we have to some extent the power of guiding our fate—of, at anyrate, averting disaster.

Now, then, what is love? We have been treating this question superficially; but let us go deeper. Why do you love your wife? Is it for her beauty? There are many women more beautiful than she; you have seen them and yet you do not love them. Is it for her talents? There are many women more talented than she; you have known them and yet you do not love them.

No, you answer, rather bewildered; you do not know why you love her—only, somehow, she fits in with you. We are now getting a little closer. She fits in with you.

When you met your wife, you recognized in her physiognomy, in her gait, in her manner of talking, in fact in all her external qualities, the indications of the counterpart of your own mind.

Then there was an upheaval of your being towards her; and this made itself conscious to you through the sensation of love. You were yourself totally unable to say why you loved her; most men are little acquainted with the true springs and motives of their actions.

It certainly lies within our power to influence and change to some degree our character. And here lies the solution of the difficulty; for by so modifying our character as to make it instinctively friendly and partial to the good and virtuous and such qualities as insure our happiness, we would be preparing a receptivity for a nature that would not disappoint our expectations. But not only must we have that receptivity, but we must also possess the power to recognize such a nature in others—to avoid mistake.

If we were able to read other people's characters, and were also perfectly virtuous ourselves, we should be very unlikely to make a mistake; for the reading of a person's character in such a case must be instantaneous, instinctive. Such perfection it is impossible to attain, and hence all people are liable to err; but he that understands and acts on these considerations is less likely to be mistaken.

Whatever makes right living, according to the law of God, difficult to a sincere man—that is a burden. Whatever thing within or without a man, in his nature, in his habits, or in his circumstances, makes it hard for him to live purely and rightly—that is included in this term burden. It may be in his mental constitution; it may be in his bodily health; it may be in the habits of his education; it may be in his relation to worldly affairs; it may be in his domestic circumstance; it may be in his peculiar liabilities to temptation and sin. It includes the whole catalogue of conditions and influences, and causes, that weigh men down, and hinder them, when they are endeavoring sincerely to live lives of rectitude.

When the sun shines upon the inferior bodies, if solid bodies when they reflect their beams, they cast their light and heat upon other bodies that are nearest about them; but if they be empty and hollow bodies, such as have no solidity, they take all into themselves, and reflect not. So it is in this case: They that be sound Christians, only possessed with power of grace, they cannot hold any goodness to themselves, but are ready to reflect it, and make others partakers of it. So must our labor and care be, not hollow and false, but sincere and true, affecting the good of others as of ourselves.

Nothing truly precious swims helplessly in the great wake of God's clear method, but every part of the man can be, and therefore strives to be, abreast of the other. The mountains follow the earth, the air has clasped the mountains, and daylight and starlight stream forward entangled in the air. Clutching for dear life to each other, all solid and tenuous things describe the great invariable motion, and God is in the manifoldness, drenching it with uniformity.

The common fluency of speech in many men, and most women, is owing to a scarcity of matter and a scarcity of words, for whoever is a master of language and has a mind full of ideas will be apt in speaking to hesitate upon the choice of both; whereas common speakers have only one set of ideas, and one set of words to clothe them in, and these are always ready at the mouth; so people come faster out of a church when it is almost empty, than when a crowd is at the door.

Let not mistakes or wrong directions, of which every man, in his studies and elsewhere, falls into many, discourage you. There is precious instruction to be got by finding that we are wrong. Let a man try faithfully, manfully, to be right, he will daily grow more and more right. It is at the bottom the condition on which all men have to cultivate themselves.

They that have read about everything are thought to understand everything too; but it is not always so. Reading furnishes the mind only with the materials of knowledge; it is thinking that makes what we read ours. We are of the ruminating kind, and it is not enough to cram ourselves with a great load of collections—we must chew them over again.

No man's spirits were ever hurt by doing his duty; on the contrary, one good action, one temptation resisted and overcome, one sacrifice of desire or interest, purely for conscience' sake, will prove a cordial for weak and low spirits, far beyond what either indulgence or diversion or company can do for them.

The art of spreading lies may be compared to the art of pin-making. There is usually some truth, which I call the wire; as this passes from hand to hand, one gives it a polish, another a point, others make and put on the head, and at last the pin is completed.

The first years of man must make provision for the last. He that never thinks can never be wise. Perpetual levity must end in ignorance; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short or miserable.

He that easily believes rumors has the principle within him to augment rumors. It is strange to see the ravenous appetite with which some devourers of character and happiness fix upon the sides of the innocent and unfortunate.

There is a sanctity in suffering when meekly born. Our duty, though set about by thorns, may still be made a staff, supporting even while it tortures. Cast it away, and, like the prophet's wand, it changes to a snake.

It is generally known that he who expects much will be often disappointed; yet disappointment seldom cures us of expectation, or has any other effect than that of producing a moral sentence or peevish exclamation.

The fruition of what is unlawful must be followed by remorse. The core sticks in the throat after the apple is eaten, and the sated appetite loathes the interdicted pleasure for which innocence was bartered.

There is a Sunday conscience, as well as a Sunday coat; and those who make religion a secondary concern put the coat and conscience carefully by to put on only once a week.

The end of learning is to know God, and out of that knowledge to love him, and to imitate him, as we may the nearest, by possessing our souls of true virtue.

There is little pleasure in the world that is true and sincere besides the pleasure of doing our duty and doing good. I am sure no other is comparable to this.

Resolve to edge in a little reading every day, if it is but a single sentence. If you gain fifteen minutes a day it will make itself felt at the end of the year.

The blossoms of passion, gay and luxuriant flowers, are bright and full of fragrance, but they beguile us and lead us astray, and their odor is deadly.

Neither length of acquaintance, mutual secrecies, nor height of benefits, can bind a vicious heart; no man being good to others that is not good in himself.

Some men will believe no thing but what they can comprehend; and there are but few things that such are able to comprehend

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Men spend their lives in the service of their passions, instead of employing their passions in the service of their lives.

No sinners are so intolerant as those who have just turned saints.

The World's Happenings.

California is giving the East cherries at $1.25 per pound.

Thelate Sultan of Zanzibar is said to have been the father of 220 children.

There is a clergyman in England named Straight whose curate is named Crooked.

An average of over five hundred gallons of water is used daily in every house in Philadelphia.

An orange tree in the gardens of Versailles is 430 years old. It was planted by Eleanor of Castile in 1416.

There are 23 crematories in Europe, in which over 1400 incinerations have taken place during the past year.

Oliver Beirne, who lately died in Louisiana, was considered the richest planter there. His wealth was placed at some $60,000,000.

At Cairo, Michigan, a young woman mistook for her hair dye the family bluing bottle, and now she sports a head of azure hair.

Day began at sunrise among most of the Northern nations; at sunset among the Athenians and Jews, and among the Romans at midnight.

Every once in a while upon the streets of Cincinnati you meet in large letters this touching legend: "Stop and Get Your Sunday Bottle Filled."

A Louisville man recently called on the proprietor of a hotel in Bullitt county, Ky., and paid him 75 cents for meals he had eaten there 15 years ago.

"It," a remarkable cat, died at Putnam, Conn., last week. The animal had seven legs and two tails. Her strange deformity enabled her to do many tricks.

A parrot which died at Poughkeepsie recently was quite a linguist, being able, it is said, to talk in the English, Dutch and Portuguese languages. It was valued at $300.

A Hutchinson, Kan., paper tells that a doctor at Leavenworth, who was hurriedly called to extract a bullet from a wounded man's abdomen, found the missile in the patient's boot.

An Osage, Ind., man fell asleep in a barber's chair, and suddenly arousing, threw up his hands, knocked the razor out of the barber's hands, and in falling the sharp blade cleft his ear nearly in two.

An autopsy on three cows that met mysterious deaths, near Decatur, Ill., revealed a quantity of twine—almost a ball—in the stomach of each. The twine was of the kind used on one of the farm machines.

An excitable Ohio man, whose wife's clothing got afire, attempted to quench the blaze by deluging her with whisky. Of course this only added fuel, and the woman was so badly burned that she died.

Two ragged Italian children, who were arrested in Chicago while gathering cigar stumps on the streets, explained that they sold the discarded weeds to a fellow-countryman for 15 cents a pound, and that they were "made into cigarettes."

A young lady in Chicago jumped out of a second-story window the other day, and it was thought that she tried to commit suicide until it was discovered that while curling her hair she accidentally dropped a hot slate pencil down her back.

In the postoffice at Concord, N. H., the postmaster found a pouch the other day which had been lost 19 years, and which contained 118 letters for that city. There were three registered letters with money in them, and their non-receipt had upset half a dozen offices.

Constant use having worn away the front leaves of the Bible employed in Brunswick, Ga., for swearing witnesses, another copy of the Scriptures has been purchased, as the local lawyers were in doubt "whether an oath made on a Bible minus its first four chapters is binding."

An earnest young clergyman in a Canadian church recently moved his congregation with the pathetic story of the drowning of a little child. But the anti-climax came when, by a slip of the tongue, he pictured the father dragging out of the cruel water "the life of his bodyless child."

The suggestion made by the President of the New York Board of Education that an American flag be placed over the principal's desk in each of the public schools of the city, is being carried out as fast as public spirited Gothamites are to be found who will furnish the national banner at their own expense.

Samuel Stevens, a milk dealer of Monroe, Conn., on going to his barn on a recent morning, found that the entire flooring of his cow stables had given way during the night and precipitated his ten cows into the opening. Nothing remained but the stanchions to which his stock were fastened, and from these hung ten dead cows.

Fashion enabled a New York servant girl to cleverly pilfer her mistress' goods. She secreted them in her bustle, but the extraordinary size of the latter finally attracted attention, and an examination was the outcome. Three were found that around and secreted inside the bustle one dozen pairs of stockings, a pair of child's shoes and three handkerchiefs.

The shooting of a big dog by a French custom house officer in the north of France has given rise to some queer stories in the French papers. The officer shot the dog because he was suspiciously fat. The post-mortem examination revealed the fact that the dog wore a leather coat, made to look like his own skin, and skilfully fastened at the shoulders and haunches in such a way as to completely conceal the ends of the hair. In this coat the dog carried several hundred cigars.

A prominent Englishman is commemorating Queen Victoria's jubilee in a remarkable manner. He has caused to be planted on the slopes of a mountain in Wales a plantation composed of several thousand trees. Nearly 200 men have been constantly employed since the jubilee in planting the trees, which will be so arranged as to represent the words "Jubilee, 1887." Each letter measures 200 yards long and 25 feet wide. The first tree of the letter J was planted on jubilee day.

ONLY.

It was only a little blossom,
Just the merest bit of bloom,
But it brought a glimpse of summer
To the little darkened room.

It was only a glad "Good morning,"
As she passed along the way,
But it spread the morning's glory
Over the livelong day.

Only a song, but the music,
Though simply pure and sweet,
Brought back to better pathways
The reckless roving feet.

Only! In our blind wisdom
How dare we say it all?
Since the ages alone can tell us
Which is the great or small?

"Poor Benton."

BY K. C.

"WELL, Miss Lalinda, in what way can I be of service to you this morning?"

The young lady addressed had entered the lawyer's private office a few minutes before, and had been waiting for him to come in.

"I have nothing very serious to tell you," said Miss Russell; "at least I do not suppose you will so regard it."

The lawyer upon whom the young heiress had called was an elderly gentleman, who had been an intimate friend of both her parents.

From her deceased mother Lalinda had inherited a handsome fortune, that had been placed in his charge. Her father, meantime, in consequence of having obtained an important position as foreign purchasing agent for a large commercial house, had been residing abroad for several years—in Paris, most of the time.

Plunging into the midst of her story, but with a slight embarrassment, Miss Russell went on to say that Mr. Alfred Mayfield, a gentleman some ten years older than herself, had been for the last two or three years somewhat persistently attentive to her, and yet never in a way that could be safely regarded as implying anything more than that he desired to be considered a very good friend.

Mr. Mayfield was a gentleman of fortune, well educated, especially in the lighter accomplishments, had been about the world a good deal, was quite at home among the ladies, and a welcome guest in the higher circles.

"Mr. Mayfield had never done much close thinking, or devoted himself to any regular business," said the lawyer, interposing a remark.

"He does not appear to think anything of that kind necessary," replied Lalinda. "He calls it hard work, and is disposed to speak very lightly of everything of that sort. In fact, he seems to think that it is the business of the lower classes to make money, and of the higher to spend it. The earning of money belongs to drudges, he says—dray-horses, he calls them sometimes. To obtain money by any sort of actual labor, either mental or physical, seems to lower a person in his estimation."

"But he has not proposed to you?" asked the lawyer.

"No, sir; but I wish he would," said the young lady, with a sly, meaning look. "I would then know how exactly what to do."

"What! so rash as to refuse Mr. Mayfield, a gentleman of wealth and accomplishments?" said her guardian, smiling.

"Yes, sir; politely and quietly, but effectually, I hope. I believe he has made up his mind, Mr. McAleer, to marry me, and that his effort has been to keep just near enough to me to prevent anyone else from approaching, and to create a general impression that he is my accepted lover."

"Well, has anything of more than usual interest occurred lately?" asked Mr. McAleer.

"Yes, sir," answered Lalinda. "Something that troubles me. You know Clarke Benton, I believe?"

"Oh, yes. A very different man from the one you have been speaking of. Is he a rival of Mr. Mayfield?" added her guardian, with a quizzical look.

"Please don't tease me now, Mr. McAleer. Mr. Mayfield called last evening, and had been there some time when Mr. Benton also called. On observing Mr. Mayfield, he excused himself after a few minutes, and was about to retire, when, for some reason, Mr. Mayfield begged him not to do so, expressed a great interest in his company, and looking at me with a strange expression that impressed me very favorably, said he hoped I would, for his sake, invite our friend to remain. I was sure Mr. Mayfield either did not desire him to remain, or else wanted him to do so for some sinister purpose. I took him at his word, however, and very cordially and earnestly begged Mr. Benton to prolong his call, at which Mr. Mayfield, taking a pack of cards from a side-table, said, 'A three-handed game of nap would be in order just now. Of course you play nap, Mr. Benton?'

"'Occasionally; but I have no skill in that line,' was his reply.

"'Then perhaps we can give him a little instruction,' said Mr. Mayfield to me.

"We played along in a careless way, talking of other subjects, until we had run through nine games, when, strangely enough, we were even, each having won three. I then suggested that we play one more, to finish; and observed at the same moment that Mr. Mayfield was evidently disappointed at the result of the playing, and very anxious to win that last game. We had each thrown all our cards except one, and had taken the same number of tricks; so that the result depended on the last throw. Mr. Mayfield threw his last card, the ace of diamonds, and I followed with the ace of hearts, when, with a sudden meaning glance at me, he said, 'That is just right, Miss Russell; hearts come to diamonds, of course.'

"'Unless a trump follows,' said Mr. Benton, with a laugh, throwing the knave of clubs.

"'What!' said Mr. Mayfield, with a dismayed look. 'I thought the trumps had all been played.'

"'They have now,' said Mr. Benton, laughing again, and not seeming to see anything in the little incident, nor did I imagine there was anything suggestive or pointed in his remark. Mr. Mayfield, however, evidently got that impression, and was disturbed, but tried to conceal his feelings. The cards were then put aside, and soon after Mr. Benton took his leave.

"'Poor Clarke Benton!' said Mr. Mayfield; and by the way, he always speaks of him in sort of pitying tone. 'I pity poor Clarke! Obliged to dig and delve all the time in that old machine shop. How very common his manners are; but, of course, he cannot help it.'

"'Mr. Benton holds a very respectable position at the Fulton Works, I remarked. 'He is superintendent of the business, and has been for several years, at a salary of $5000 a year.'"

"Yes, and has a small interest also in the business," interposed Mr. McAleer.

"But from what Mr. Mayfield said he is about to lose his situation," said Lalinda.

"Ah, how is that? What did he tell you?"

"He said again that he felt very sorry for the poor fellow, and wished he could help him in some way. He had just learned that his services at the works were very unsatisfactory, and that at the yearly meeting of the board, which would take place before long, another man would be put in his place, who had, in fact, already been selected."

"That is a curious statement," said the lawyer, after reflecting a few moments. "Some mischief going on there, I suspect. A client of mine is a trustee in that company, and I will find out what it means."

Some two or three weeks had passed, when Lalinda, calling incidentally on her guardian, was asked, "Well, Miss Lalinda, have you seen your friend, Mr. Mayfield, lately?"

"Yes, sir, for a few moments to-day; and he told me that Mr. Benton has, after all, found a friend somewhere, who has enabled him to retain his situation, and he is very glad of it. He would have been so sorry to have seen him thrown out of employment."

"Among the hardest lessons of life," said the lawyer, "are those that bring to the young and unsuspecting a knowledge of the dark, deceitful, and hypocritical manœuvrings transpiring around them. Immediately after you gave me that piece of information the other day, I made inquiries, from which I soon learned the facts of the case.

"Mr. Mayfield himself, through his lawyer—a shrewd, managing fellow—had approached an old gentleman, Mr. Robinson, who holds the largest share in the stock of the company, and to whom, in consequence of the fact, has been conceded the right every year to name—in fact, virtually appoint—the superintendent. Mr. Benton has, however, been regularly chosen, with the approval of all the trustees except one, who has wanted the situation for his own son—an unsuitable person, however, in the opinion of the other members of the board.

"Mr. Mayfield's attorney represented to Mr. Robinson that Benton had been managing very badly for some time, and that another party, Mr. Williams, a stockholder and trustee, was ready to place his son in that position, and would hold himself responsible for his successful management. By these and other statements, Mr. Robinson was finally induced to sign a proxy, already prepared by the lawyer and directed to Mr. Williams, empowering him to vote his stock, and also to appoint the superintendent, as he would not be able to attend the next meeting of the board."

"How does it happen, then, that Mr. Benton is still there?" asked Lalinda.

"We lawyers sometimes see through mean tricks, and find ways to avert them," said Mr. McAleer, smiling. "I called at once on Mr. Robinson, whom I know very well, and told him that I believed Mr. Benton was being unfairly treated. He seemed quite disturbed, and asked what could be done under the circumstances. I asked him if he would like to sell his stock at its market value; and finding him willing to do so, I secured him a purchaser in a friend of mine, Mr. Phillips, who was present at the recent meeting of the board.

"At that meeting," continued the lawyer, "Mr. Williams remarked that it would be necessary to make a change in regard to the superintendent, and that, by direction of Mr. Robinson, whose proxy he held, he would name his own son, Edgar Williams, for that office.

"At this point, the clerk of the board remarked that there was some mistake in regard to that matter, as the stock formerly owned by Mr. Robinson had been assigned to Mr. Phillips, who was present. My friend confirmed that statement, and added that, as he had heard of no good reason for changing the superintendent, he was disposed to continue him; and the motion was approved by all except Mr. Williams, who was so disturbed, that he instantly declined to serve any longer on the board."

"But what could have been Mr. Mayfield's object in all this?" asked Lalinda. "Has he any interest in the company?"

"I can imagine a reason, Miss Lalinda. That situation was everything to Mr. Benton in a business point, and his summary dismissal would have been a terrible blow, from which he could not have very easily recovered. But our young friend is all right now. And how is it that you take so much interest in him?" he added, mischievously. "Is he also one of your beaux?"

"Not exactly," said Lalinda, blushing. "But I know he feels interested in me, and I believe he has been kept from manifesting his sentiments by having been made to believe that Mr. Mayfield was my accepted lover."

"Very likely," said the lawyer. "And I have no doubt that Mr. Mayfield will endeavor to determine that question for himself before long."

Some things had occurred lately of which an inkling had come to the knowledge of Mr. McAleer that led him to speak somewhat confidently.

Although not engaged in any real and consecutive business, choosing rather to be regarded as a gentleman of fortune and leisure, Mr. Mayfield had been privately speculating, buying "margins," and losing in most instances.

In consequence of these operations—carried on, of course, through confidential agents—his fortune, although not seriously impaired, was beginning to feel the want of the help which an alliance with the fair Lalinda would afford.

"With your permission, my dear Lalinda," said Mr. Mayfield, when alone with the young heiress one afternoon, "I would like to place this ring on your finger."

"Ah!" said the young lady, "a very handsome ring,"—taking it and admiring the pure and delicate tints of the costly diamond that was resting in its gold setting.

The gentleman then proceeded with a story of love, very gracefully and elegantly told, to which his companion listened with a quiet if not ominous composure.

At last, taking her hand in his, and preparing to place the ring on her finger, he said, "This act, my dear, for which I have perhaps almost, if not quite, taken your permission for granted, will be the sign and signal that our hands, as well as our hearts, will soon be united."

"You have made a very pleasant speech, Mr. Mayfield," said Lalinda, quietly withdrawing her hand. "Do you desire me to understand that you are making me an offer of marriage?"

"Why, of course, my dear," was the embarrassed reply.

"Well, sir, I hope my answer will not cause you any serious disappointment or permanent regret, but I must respectfully decline your offer."

"What! you, my dear Lalinda? The hope of my life, the treasure of my heart?" with a few other well-conned declarations.

But it was of no use; the would-be suitor soon realized that under the veil of that quiet and pleasant demeanor there was a soul that he could not trifle with.

Another three months had passed, when that hand yielded itself without the least reluctance to another and much less costly engagement ring, but it was placed there by one who was honored, respected and loved.

A few weeks after the marriage that soon followed, Mr. McAleer, calling one evening on his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Benton, remarked that he had been thinking lately that he had come when it would be proper for him to relieve himself from any further direct responsibility in regard to the management of the lady's fortune.

"The obligations which were imposed upon me by your mother's will, also with your father's approval, Mrs. Benton," said the lawyer, "required me to take sole charge of your property until you were twenty-one, unless in the event of your marriage before that time to someone to whom I thought best to give up my stewardship, which I am now ready and willing to do to your husband, Mr. Clarke Benton. I have the satisfaction of reporting to you that not a penny has been lost by bad investments, or in any other way. These papers have been carefully prepared, and contain an exhibit of everything."

"Shall I take charge of them, my dear?" said Mr. Benton.

"Certainly," added Mr. McAleer, "you may as well run them through hastily now, as there are some matters about which you may wish to inquire."

"Why, what is this?" said the young man, after a few moments, as a document, arresting his attention, was regarded with unusual interest. "Can it be that my wife is a stockholder in our company, and to the amount of five thousand pounds?"

"That is the case," replied the lawyer. "By disposing of some other securities which were not drawing so much as your company has been paying in dividends, I bought for your wife the entire stock formerly owned by Mr. Robinson, but which has passed temporarily into the hands of my friend, Mr. Phillips."

"The stock is a safe investment, I think, Lalinda," observed Mr. Benton, "and I am glad it is in your hands."

But, while making this remark, his thoughts were busy with the solution of a problem that had been a mystery to him. Why did that gentleman, Mr. Phillips, come in there just at the right time, as the owner of that stock, and secure him a continuance of his office as superintendent? Could that stock have been bought by Lalinda Russell after he was engaged to her?

That inquiry which was forming itself in his mind, and beginning to be looked at, not because it was an unpleasant one, but yet slightly embarrassing, was immediately set at rest for ever by the lawyer, who, reading his thoughts in the expression of his countenance, said, "No, no, my friend; your wife had no connection with that little manœuvre. It was my work, not hers. She did, indeed, tell me that she had learned from a certain gentleman that 'poor Clarke Benton,' as he called him, was about to lose his situation, for which he was very sorry. The stock was bought by my friend as an investment of his own, and I have bought it from him for your wife since your marriage. That is the whole story."

"Well, my dear," said the young husband, turning to his wife, with a smile, "I am, after all, your humble servant, and shall hold my place as superintendent of the company at your pleasure."

"And during good behavior," added Lalinda, archly.

The years passed on; first five, then ten, and more following.

"Poor Clarke Benton" continued to be principal manager of the "Fulton Manufacturing Works," a valuable and flourishing business, most of the stock belonging to him and his wife.

As for Mr. Mayfield, he succeeded, after several disappointments, in marrying a young lady of considerable wealth, who very foolishly placed her entire fortune in his hands.

He then glided off into stock speculations, but without any practical knowledge of the business, and for a few years was a nice bubble for the bulls and bears to send up and down, which they continued to do right merrily until there was nothing left to rise or fall.

The Island Pearl.

BY J. L. P.

IN the midst of a scene so grandly picturesque that nature must have formed it in one of her wildest moods, stood a young girl of peculiar and dazzling beauty. She stood upon the verge of a high cliff which dipped with a sudden descent down to the edge of the foaming waves at its base; for near the shore stretched a line of breakers, which raised their white crests as though in defiance of each advancing billow as it rolled softly forth from the mass of blue, placid waters beyond, where a graceful yacht lay at anchor, with its white sails gleaming in the sun like the wings of some huge sea-bird.

It was upon this unusual visitor that Zillah's eyes were fixed, with an interest so absorbing as to render her unconscious of the approach of a figure so strange and peculiar that a stranger would have recoiled from it in dismay.

Not so did Zillah; for when, with an entreating gesture, she extended her arms towards the vessel and half said, half sighed, "Ah, that I, too, could spread wings and fly far, far away from here to that beautiful, distant world beyond those blue waves!"—and old Meg started forward and laid her shriveled hand upon Zillah's arm, saying, "And so my pretty one would fly away and leave old Meg for ever!"—the girl turned and threw her arms about the nurse's scrawny neck, and pressed the soft velvet of her young cheek against the scarred, wrinkled face.

"But I would not go without you," she whispered; "I will take you with me."

"And have your tender heart made to ache by seeing how people would turn their backs and shudder at sight of me? No, my Zillah; when you go from here Meg will stay behind and die, for I could not live without a sight of my bonny lass, who was but a wee baby when I first took her in these arms."

Zillah laughed, and said, "Set your mind at rest, Meg. If you like, I will stay here for ever."

Then she turned again to her rapt study of the stranger yacht, which represented to her imagination that wonderful outside world which had visited her so often in her dreams.

Meanwhile, aboard the Swan the two figures on the coast had become objects of interested notice.

It was by accident that the yachtman had entered the little harbor.

But they knew not that the picturesque inlet so completely shut in from observation was the haunt of a band of bold, law-defying men.

But so it was, although Meg's watchfulness had shielded Zillah from even a suspicion of evil, and she had grown up pure and guileless of a thought of wrong as the most delicately nurtured child of affluence.

The Swan had been fitted out by a young gentleman of wealth, Garnett Freeleigh, to give pleasure to his young sister, whose health had been impaired by too close application to her studies.

During the summer they had been in many different waters, and Garnett had been rewarded for his painstaking exertions for Alice's sake by seeing the roses of health again blooming upon her cheek.

It was Alice Freeleigh who had caught sight of the flutter of Zillah's dress as she stood upon the cliff; and she had levelled her field-glass at the spot. After a long, lingering gaze, she called her brother to her side.

"See, Garnet," she said, handing him the glass, and pointing towards Zillah's distant form, "I want you to tell me if that beautiful creature has not the most perfect face you have ever set your eyes upon? I would fain feast my eyes with a nearer view of it. Please, Garnett, let us go ashore."

Garnett touched his lips lightly to his sister's white forehead.

"Little enthusiast!" he said, playfully, "how do we know what our reception might be?"

"I will carry with me a peace-offering, which cannot fail to gain us a cordial welcome. I will give Bonnie to that lovely young girl. I'm sure she couldn't resist you—could she, birdie?"

And she lifted her pet—a gorgeously-colored parrot—and laid her cheek tenderly against its glossy plumage.

"You must, indeed, be deeply anxious to go ashore, Ally, if you are willing to give Bonnie away," said Garnett, in unfeigned surprise.

Then he gave orders to his crew to lower a boat, and soon they found themselves skimming over the blue waters, propelled by the sailors' brawny arms. They could not take a direct course, as the threatening breakers loomed up in that direction. But they steered for a placid spot at some distance, and at last effected a landing.

Zillah had watched their movements with breathless interest.

It was an era in her secluded life. When the party came near enough for her to speak to them, and her eyes rested upon Alice, the girl stood for a moment, so rapt in surprise and pleasure at the sight of such a beautiful vision, that she was oblivious to all else.

Alice's silvery voice was the first to break the spell, as she moved over the velvety turf, and held out her hand.

"We are tired of being on ship-board, and have come to make you a visit. Are we welcome?"

Zillah held the tiny fingers for a moment in her rosy palm, as she answered, fervently, "Yes. It is like seeing an angel from heaven to look at you. I have never before rested my eyes upon a woman's face, excepting that of my dear old Meg." And Zillah turned and beckoned Meg to approach.

As she did so, all eyes were turned upon the advancing figure. It was, indeed, a singular one.

About half the ordinary height, it looked as though some heavy hand must have been placed upon her head until a stature of six feet had been compressed into three; for what was lacking in length was made in breadth. Her face was as peculiar as her form. No one feature harmonized with its neighbor. But an expression of kindness and of good-will beamed from the small black eyes as they turned from one to another of the group, which changed to one of grateful delight as Alice went up to her, and said, in her graceful way, "I hope you, too, are glad to see us. If I had known you were here, I would have asked my old nurse, Emma, to join our party."

Meg nodded her head emphatically.

"Bless your pretty face," she said, heartily, "I am as glad to see you as the robins are to see the spring."

"There, Meg!" whispered Zillah; "she's from the outside world, and she didn't turn her back on you. Now go and get up a nice luncheon. We must be hospitable, and not let them go away hungry."

The faithful creature disappeared, but soon returned with a dainty, but somewhat curious, mixture of viands.

Preserves and highly-spiced foreign preparations were placed side by side with coarse brown bread.

Strawberries, flanked by dishes of thick yellow cream, blushed redly beside potted tamarinds and pickled olives. Even the dishes upon which they were served partook of the same incongruity.

Coarse pottery contrasted with wares from China, and Venetian glasses, so fragile a breath might shiver them, held draughts of home-brewed ale.

An hour or two passed swiftly and pleasantly. The romance surrounding their hurried visit charmed Alice; and Zillah's impulsive heart throbbed with a delight so intense, that it was akin to pain. It was as though some brilliant tropical bird had been borne to her retreat upon its delicate wings, bringing with it a waft of the delicious odors of its native land.

And when Garnett said at last, "Come, Ally; we must go," her ingenuous face clouded, and her eyes filled with tears.

But the pearly drops vanished like mist before the rising sun as Alice answered, "I know Zillah would enjoy seeing our pretty Swan. Let us take her back with us."

And when Garnett turned towards her, and reiterated Alice's implied invitation, she could only murmur a faint "Yes;" for her heart rose in her throat, and almost stopped her breath for very joy.

Meg knew that it was against orders, but she had not the heart to interpose with any objection.

So she said, "Come back soon; it would not do to have your father return and find you away."

But as she watched Zillah's departure, it was with a mind ill at ease.

Two hours later night had cast her sable mantle over the peaceful scene.

Meg had retired to rest within a portion of the cave which comprised the home of her master and his band.

It was separated from the main part by a narrow passage, which wound first in one direction, then in another, until it seemed almost completely isolated.

For that reason it had been chosen for Zillah's room, and had been fitted up with a rude attempt at luxury. Into it no one ever intruded; for Meg had impressed it upon the minds of the unscrupulous bandits that Zillah was under supernatural protection, and, as the old woman bore the reputation of a witch among them, they were really afraid of incurring her malediction if they disregarded her warnings.

It was fortunate for her that Zillah's room was considered so sacred a place, for suddenly the sound of an approaching footstep struck upon her ear.

She rose hastily from the couch upon which she had thrown herself. How could she explain what had happened to her stern master?

He would surely strike her dead at his feet, and then what would become of her nursling when she came back on the morrow? She would be like a dove among hawks without her faithful protection.

She hastened to meet her master, and placing her finger on her lips, motioned to him to be silent.

The outlaw paused, and Meg whispered, "Do not disturb the pretty one; she will be all the bonnier for a sweet sleep."

The man hesitated a moment; then he said, "You are right. I want her to look her best, too, to-morrow, for, hark you Meg, it is to be her wedding-day. I have for some time had my doubts about Hugo, and I wish to bind his interests more securely to mine, by giving him Zillah for his wife."

Meg's brown face turned of a dusky pallor.

"But the pretty one hates Hugo," she ventured to say.

"That matters not. Use your influence over the girl to make her consent; for, as I am a live man, she shall wed him to-morrow."

As he spoke, he chanced to look out upon the bay, and caught sight of the glimmering lights upon the Swan.

"Ha! what is that?" he asked.

"You can see for yourself," was Meg's surly answer.

A savage smile curled the man's grim lips.

"I will see for myself. It is plain that some congenial work is ready for me and my brave fellows. I will betake me to rest, and gain store of strength against the morning's sun rises."

With these words, he strode away to where his men had thrown themselves down, and were already sleeping heavily.

Meg waited quietly until his heavy breathing proved him to have followed their example.

Then she hastily gathered together some articles, tied them into a bundle, and stole with them down to the water's edge.

Loosening a boat from its fastenings, she was soon on her way to give warning to the occupants of the yacht, who were enjoying themselves in utter unconsciousness of their approaching peril.

A murmur of voices and an occasional ripple of silvery laughter came from the deck.

Meg rested on her oars and gave a low, peculiar whistle, which Zillah heard and recognized.

Soon there was a bustle on shipboard, and then a strong rope-ladder was lowered, and Meg ascended into the yacht.

When she found herself in the presence of Garnett and his sister she went at once to Alice, in her agitation passing by Zillah as though she had not seen her, and throwing herself upon her knees before her, said, in a voice broken by emotion, "Lady, you have a face like an angel, and I know you will not turn a deaf ear to my appeal. My little Zillah must not come back. Old Meg must live without her. She will not be a burthen to you, for see this,"—and she opened a box of tarnished leather, and there lay a necklace, composed of brilliants of the purest water, which caught and concentrated the light from the swinging-lamps, until they seemed like so many burning, fiery eyes.

"Do not think she has no right to them," she continued, as Garnett stepped forward, and, taking them from her, examined them curiously, "for they belonged to my pretty one's own mother. Yes, it is true. My master had a grudge against her family, and he gratified it by stealing the child after the christening feast, while, according to an ancient custom, the family diamonds were still around her baby neck, although the pendant they had held had been removed. Old Meg's arm received her when the master returned from his wicked errand. And much as I love her, I must part with her now, for there will be no other chance to put her in safe keeping should I let this one pass by. Yes, my pretty," as Zillah gave a little cry, and, starting forward, threw her arms about old Meg's neck, "I have come to give warning that this vessel, with all on board, must be far away from here before the morning dawns, for the master has returned and knows of its being here."

"I shall not go unless you go too," said Zillah.

Meg's face grew convulsed with a mingling of emotion.

"If you stay you will have to accept Hugo as your husband. The master has sworn it."

Zillah's face grew of a deathly pallor; but she drew herself up proudly.

"Sooner than that should happen I will be the bride of Death!" she answered. "But I shall not go away and leave you. I will stay, and we will die together."

Garnett had been an interested listener. Now he said, earnestly, "You will be welcome if you conclude to accompany your mistress; and, indeed, I think she would pine away without your care. It would almost be like parting a child from its parents to separate you."

Unnoticed, he had given the signal for departure; and, even as he spoke, the vessel obeyed the wind and sprang lightly into the Channel.

Then, as Meg started up in consternation, Garnett pointed to the gleaming lights which had suddenly appeared upon the headland.

"The outlaws are stirring," he said, "and probably have discovered your absence. It will not be safe for you to appear among them. They will think you a traitor, and put you to death."

Thus the question was settled. All were too busy in the efforts to guide the craft into safer waters to stop for further argument.

Their exertions were rewarded with success, for wind and tide both favored them, and in another hour they were safe.

* * * * * *

Three years later the carriages conveying a brilliant bridal party from the cathedral were delayed by a dense crowd gathered around some object of interest.

A famous outlaw had been captured after being severely wounded in the struggle with his pursuers. He had committed so many daring and cruel acts that his name had become an object of terror to the populace.

A price had been set upon his head for months, but his cunning had thus far enabled him to escape.

As the blooming face of the bride was turned towards the excited multitude it blanched suddenly.

"Oh, Garnett!" she said, tremblingly; "well do I know the evil face of that man," pointing towards the captured outlaw, from whose ghastly wounds the blood was streaming. "It is he whom I called father so many years, though with a loathing I tried in vain to quell as being thankless and unnatural."

"Do not fear, my own," said Garnett, soothingly. "He is in the hands of justice at last. He cannot harm you."

The prisoner's wounds were pronounced mortal, although of a nature which might not prove fatal at once.

Garnett availed himself of the opportunity to visit him in his cell so as to learn something definite about Zillah's parentage, as his knowledge extended no farther than the meagre statement furnished him by Meg.

At first he was unsuccessful in his efforts to induce the outlaw to make a clean breast of his crime.

But as death drew near he made a full confession, giving such minute particulars of time and place that there could be no doubt but that he had told the truth.

But when Zillah sought her parents it was to find that they both had been called away from earth for many years, and that the property, which had been entailed upon the males of the family, had come into the possession of a distant cousin, who was travelling upon the Continent.

She sought and obtained permission to visit the place of her birth; and, leaning upon her husband's arm, she passed through the fine suites of apartments until they came to the picture-gallery.

It needed not the guide who accompanied them to tell Zillah which one among the portraits of high-born beauties was that of her mother; for it was as like to herself as though it had been taken for her.

She stood before it long and silently, her heart swelling with emotion.

At last she turned to Garnett, and said, piteously, "Oh, my husband, what a cruel fate is mine! Other daughters can have their living mothers, while I cannot even own her picture! It seems as though my heart would break at the sight of that lovely, loving face!"

Garnett soothed her as best he might.

He dared not tell her of his hope to receive permission to have it copied, lest he should be disappointed.

But no objection was made by those in charge of the estate; and upon her birthday, which occurred soon after, he placed an exquisite miniature of her mother upon the Bible which it was their custom to read together the last thing before going to rest.

As she took the velvet case in her hand, and opened it, she gave a surprised, grateful glance into her husband's face.

"Thank you," she said, softly, "for your gift, and for the sweet association you have given me with it. It was a beautiful thought—my angel mother and the holy book, which shall guide us to her heavenly home. What can I do to show you my gratitude?"

Her husband's kiss upon her lips was his only answer—more eloquent than words!

After All.

BY J. CASSELL.

SHE was sitting on the stile, waiting for her lover. It was past the usual hour, and she had begun to wonder if anything had happened, when she heard his step behind her.

"Darling!" she cried, and in a moment was in his arms.

Arnold Dudley was a very handsome man of twenty-five, with dark brown hair and cold blue eyes. He had come down to Chesham for peace and quietness, and whilst there had fallen in love with Genie Lysle.

Genie was not very pretty, but she was so sweet and gentle that every one loved her. She lived alone with an aged aunt, in a tiny cottage.

It was the old story—love at first sight; and the two met every night at the stile.

"Have you been here long?" he asked.

"Two hours."

"Two hours! Am I then so late?" he said, as he pulled out his watch. "But you'll pardon me, won't you, Genie?"

"Yes, if you will tell me what kept you," she said, little suspecting that, when he did tell her, the news would break her heart. His face darkened as he looked at her.

"Genie," he said, "you love me very much?"

"Why, what a funny question! Of course I do," was the answer.

"But you are very young, child; only seventeen. In a year or two you may see some one whom you will love better."

"Never! never!" cried Genie. "I shall always love you; but why do you talk so strangely?"

"Genie, I am going home to-morrow."

"To-morrow—home!" she gasped; "but you will come back?"

"No; I expect never to return!" The soft light faded from her face as she echoed his words. "I don't understand you; you frighten me."

"Listen, child. I received a letter from my father to-day, asking me to come home. A friend of his has just died, leaving an only daughter, Miriam Dane. All his property and wealth are hers if she consents to marry me. If she does not consent it will all go elsewhere."

By this time Genie's face was deathly white.

"And—and—you mean to marry her?"

"Yes, if she will have me. What else can I do? I must have money, you know!"

"True; and so you have been playing with my heart all along. Ah, I did not think you were capable of such meanness," she said with a sob.

"But, Genie, I do love you, child——"

"Stay! Utter no more falsehood! Oh! you not mean what you say; it cannot be true. Think how happy we have been! Think how much I love you! Why, I will work for you, if it must be. Oh, I love you so! Don't give me up! Don't give me up for another! Say you are only jesting. It cannot be true."

"Rise, Genie, rise. It is true, every word. To-morrow I go back to London to woo the heiress. It must be; it cannot be otherwise. Besides, you will find one in time who will make you a better husband—one whom you will love better than me. We must part to-night, Genie—for ever. Try to forget me, child, and I will try to do the same. We have been very happy in each other's love. I hate to give you up. But you see my father wishes it. If you were rich——"

"And I am glad that I am not, for then you would only marry me for my money. I know your character, now, Arnold Dudley. You have shown yourself in your true colors to-night. You think you will find in me a weak girl, of whom you have tired and thrown aside; but you are mistaken. You will find that you have a powerful woman to deal with, if not now, by-and-by. Leave me, and never let me see you face again!" cried Genie.

"Surely you do not blame me. I feel more than you do about it. Say you forgive me before I go, won't you, Genie?" he said, as he held out his hand. It was struck aside in an instant.

"How dare you!"—how dare you offer me your hand? No, I will not forgive you—never; I despise you. Listen, Arnold Dudley. As you have treated me, so shall you be treated. As sure as I stand here, you shall feel sorry for this in after-years. Now go!" Her eyes flashed fire. The look on her face he never forgot. Without one word he turned and left her. Then she flung herself on the ground, crying, in heart-broken accents, "Oh, Arnold! Arnold!"

* * * * * *

Eight years later. The Duchess of Carmine's ball is at its height. Within her splendid rooms ladies and gentlemen of high rank are gathered.

"Lady Carmine," said a handsome woman, in blue silk, "who is that beautiful woman talking to Paul?"

"Oh, that's Lady Golden, a young widow. Lord Golden died three years ago, leaving her sole possessor of all his wealth. She is said to have more money than she knows what to do with. But I will introduce you."

The two threaded their way across the crowded room, and at last reached the side of Lady Golden, who was surrounded now by a crowd of admirers.

"Lady Golden, permit me to introduce to you Lady Ainsworth, who desires to know you."

The two beautiful women bowed to one another.

"I see that you are already acquainted with my husband," said Lady Ainsworth.

"Oh," said the other, "you are the wife, then, of whom I have heard so much from Lord Ainsworth."

"Has he told you, then?" exclaimed the young wife, blushing.

"How your father died, leaving you all his wealth on the condition that you consented to marry the son of an old friend. Oh, yes; and he told me also how you refused, and how it all went to your cousin Paul, who would not accept it unless you went with it," said Lady Golden.

"You do not blame me, do you, Lady Golden?" she cried.

"Blame you? No, not I. If I had been in your place I should have done just what you have done."

"Besides, I heard that he jilted another girl for me. Why, there he is now, Lady Golden. There's Mr. Dudley. Lady Carmine is bringing him over here."

Yes, it was the same Arnold Dudley, only he was a trifle thinner and paler, and the expression of his face was sad.

"Mr. Dudley," said Lady Carmine, "you are already acquainted with Lady Golden."

The two acknowledged the introduction just as Lord Ainsworth came up for his wife.

"Mr. Dudley," said Lady Carmine, "I wish that you would take Lady Golden down to supper."

At the supper table Arnold Dudley had a chance of viewing his companion's face. Lady Golden was a very beautiful woman of twenty-five. Her lovely eyes were dark brown.

Arnold Dudley had only seen one pair like those before, but they were a trifle lighter; yet the expression was the same. All that evening he was with Lady Golden. Before the ball broke up he had received an invitation to call on her next evening. He did call, again and again.

The days flew into weeks. At last he could stand it no longer. One evening he called to see her, resolving to ask her to become his wife.

She was in the parlor waiting to receive him. She wore a handsome tea-gown of white velvet, slashed with crimson cords.

"Lady Golden, I have come here to-night to tell you that I love you. Oh, don't turn from me! Listen, or I shall go mad! I love you! I worship you! Oh, say you do not hate me!" he cried.

"Hate you? Oh no, I do not hate you," she faltered.

"Tell me, do you love me?" He caught her hand.

"Yes, Arnold, I love you!" was all she said.

"And you will be my wife?"

"And I will be your wife."

He caught her face in his hands and kissed it passionately.

Time passed quickly until two weeks before the wedding day.

"Geneva, I must tell you something, he said; "something you must know."

Sitting at her feet he told her of Genie.

"And you have never seen her since?" she asked, when he had finished.

"Never; still I should like to know where she is."

"I can tell you, Arnold," cried Geneva.

"You! Do you know her?" he asked.

"Yes, better than you. Listen. After you left her she came to London to seek employment. While here she fell in with a family of high rank, composed of a lady and her son, a man well advanced in years. She became companion in time to the old lady, and one day while reading a paper to her she came across a paragraph announcing the wedding of Miriam Dane to Lord Ainsworth. She also read of you, who were travelling around the world. Well, to make a long story short, Genie married the son, who was Lord——"

"Thank Heaven for that," interrupted Arnold; "but go on."

"She married the son, who died four years afterwards, leaving her enormously wealthy."

"His name?" cried Arnold.

"Was Lord Golden," said Geneva.

"Golden! Why, that is your name; I don't understand. You are——"

"Once Genie Lysle; now Geneva Lady Golden," she said.

"Oh, I see it now: but Genie was not pretty, and you are beautiful. Genie was small; you are tall. Genie had light-brown hair; yours is dark," he cried.

"I was then a child; now I am a woman," she said.

"You have forgiven me, Genie. You love me still," he cried.

"Love you, Arnold. No, I have never loved you."

No blush passed over her face as she uttered the lie.

"Oh, don't say that, Geneva, Genie; you'll kill me! Have you no pity?" he cried.

"Pity!" she exclaimed, in haughty tones; "what pity did you show me eight years ago? Do you remember my last words, Arnold Dudley: 'As you have treated me, so you shall be treated. As sure as I stand here, you will feel sorry for this in after years?' Those were the words, were they not? Oh, you shudder."

She laughed in scorn at his agony.

"You did not marry Miriam Dane, after all. She read your character at once. I recognized you on the night of Lady Carmine's ball. I knew also that there was no danger that you would recognize in me the insignificant little girl of eight years ago."

"Oh, spare me!" he cried, in his pain.

"So you really thought that I loved you?"

Here she burst out laughing.

"How easily you were deceived. Arise, Arnold Dudley, and go. I have had my revenge; now I am satisfied."

As she spoke these last words she swept majestically out of the room.

Arnold left the house like one in a trance. His head was dizzy; he knew not whither to go. Everything seemed to swim. He stumbled up against a railing and fell. A friend who happened to pass in a carriage lifted him in and drove him to his lodgings.

That night Lady Golden received word that Arnold Dudley was dying, and wished to see her. Her face grew white, as she ordered her carriage. She had been too harsh with him.

She felt like his murderess. She soon reached his lodgings, and was at once shown to his room.

His mind was wandering, and he kept calling for his little lost love Genie. "Oh, doctor, will he die?" she cried, with a tear-stained face.

"I hope not; yet I think he will, unless you can save him," was the answer.

"I'll try," she said.

So the doctor and nurse left the two together.

"Don't you know me, Arnold?" she cried.

"No; you're Geneva; I want Genie," he said.

"I'm Genie," she said.

"No, you're Geneva."

"Oh, don't die—don't die, darling!" she cried.

He started up. That word had great effect.

"Say it again!" he cried; "only say it again!"

"Darling! Darling!"

He burst into tears, and with that his reason came back.

"Oh, Genie, my love, don't leave me," he cried.

"No I will never leave you," she answered.

"Do you love me now?" he asked.

"Yes, dear. I have always loved you," she said.

"Then you spoke falsely when you said that you had never loved me?" he asked.

"Yes. Oh, don't die. Live for me. I will be your wife," she sobbed.

"Thank you, child. If you will I think that I shall live. I've always thought of you, Genie; always loved you; but I did not know my mind. You will marry me, sweetheart?" he said.

"Yes, I will marry you," she cried, as she placed her lips on his.

"And you'll forgive me?" he asked.

"With all my heart," she exclaimed; for he had had his punishment.

If we would be of any use one to another; if we would move in the world as Christ's witnesses, whether among equals or among inferiors, we must pray without ceasing for a gentle and a loving soul, even for that ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is the sight of God is of great price.

WILD CHILDREN.

As a rule, the line of demarcation between mankind and the lower creation is sufficiently sharp and well defined. Even those savage races who appear to us to stand on the lowest round of humanity exhibit several most essential points of difference from the brutes.

Yet, though no large number of men has ever been found without some of the distinctive marks of humanity, we cannot say as much of individual human beings. Even when we ignore the exaggerated accounts of popular tradition, there still remain some well-authenticated cases of unfortunate beings who resembled the rest of mankind in nothing but their human form. They are mostly children who, through accident or neglect, have grown up without any human nurture or care, and who have adopted the habits of those animals with whom they have been compelled to associate.

Under this head we may mention the case of the lad whom Gilbert White describes in his *Natural History of Selborne*. This author tells us that in his village there used to be an idiot boy, who from a child showed a strong propensity to bees. They were his food, his amusement, his sole object. The winter he used to doze away, after the manner of that insect, in an almost torpid state by the fireside; but in the summer he was all alert and in quest of his game in the fields and on sunny banks.

Honey-bees, humble-bees, and other kinds he used to seize with his unprotected hands, without any apprehension from their stings, and at once disarm them of their weapons, and suck their bodies for the sake of their honey-bags. Sometimes he would fill his bosom between his shirt and his skin with these captives.

As he ran about, he used to make a humming noise with his lips resembling the buzzing of bees. The lad was lean and sallow, and of a cadaverous complexion, and, except in his favorite pursuit, in which he was wonderfully adroit, discovered no manner of understanding. When a tall youth, he was removed to a distant village, where he is said to have died before he arrived at manhood.

More to the point, however, is a case related by a German philanthropist, who, after the Prussian war of independence against Napoleon I., opened a Refuge near Dusseldorf for the many hundreds of miserable children whom the distress of the times had driven forth from their ruined homes into the fields and woods.

One day a lad was brought to this Refuge who had been found crawling on all-fours among a herd of swine. His body was incased in a thick crust of dirt. Only a few rags remained of what had presumably been his clothes. His bleeding face bore witness to the stout resistance which he had offered to his captors. It appeared that he had formerly been employed as a swineherd by a farmer in one of the neighboring villages. In the night, he had been shut up in the pigsty together with the objects of his care.

As his master did not give him enough nourishment, he had indemnified himself by making one at the trough, and by sucking the teats of the sows. When his master's farm was destroyed by the French, he had fled with his pigs to the woods, and had lived there ever since. All this was discovered long afterwards, for the lad himself could only speak a few words: his only answer to the questions that were put to him was an inarticulate grunt like that of a pig.

Great difficulty was experienced in keeping him away from the lettuce-beds; he used to crawl on to them and begin to graze like a four-footed animal.

The lad had probably never been much better than an idiot. His head was small, his forehead low, his eyes bleared, and his jaws protruding. He never lost his fondness for pigs.

To the last he loved to associate with them, and they seemed to understand him.

Another wild boy who was received into the same Home exhibited no small resemblance to a bird.

His eyes moved about in the sockets like those of a bird; his face wore a bird-like expression. He could not utter any articulated sound; but he imitated the notes of the songsters of the woods with marvellous skill and correctness.

It was supposed that he had spent the greater part of his life in the forest, where he had sustained nature by climbing the trees and sucking the eggs of birds.

A similar story is told by Procopius the historian. In his time, Italy was repeatedly laid waste by the incursions of the Ostrogoths.

In one of the deserted villages a little child and some goats were left behind. One of the animals appeared to have established herself as the foster-mother of the child; for when the parents returned after some years, they were greatly surprised to find the boy still alive, though he had in the meantime contracted many of the peculiar habits of the goat.

He was called Ægisthus, or 'Goat-child.' The historian adds that he himself saw the lad, and was therefore able to vouch for the authenticity of the story.

To complain that life has no joys while there is a single creature whom we can relieve by our bounty, assist by our counsels, or enliven by our presence, is to lament the loss of that which we possess, and is just as irrational as to die of thirst with the cup in our hands.

Cheerful looks make every dish a feast, and it is that which crowns a welcome.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A despatch from Findlay, Ohio, says: "Joseph Tucker, of Marion, owns a Jersey cow with a very remarkable appetite. The animal eats every cat that comes within its reach. This Spring she has eaten five cats, and whenever a feline comes within her range of vision she is wild until she catches, kills and eats it. In all other respects the cow appears to be normal in her tastes and disposition. She is three years old and has had this peculiarity ever since she was a calf."

A remarkable case of somnambulism has occurred in the vicinity of Trure, Iowa. Ada Patterson arose in her sleep at midnight, attired herself in light summer apparel, climbed from upstairs down a post of the portico, saddled a horse and rode to a cemetery more than a mile away, where she knelt beside the grave of her father, and wept and prayed. Her hand coming in contact with a briar bush she awoke. A moment's reflection brought her to a full realization of where she was, and she fled toward the nearest house. The dogs here added to her fright, and, screaming, she climbed a tree, from which she was rescued and taken home by friends.

The emblazoning of crests upon equipages is said to be an active industry in Newark, N. J., where one firm makes a specialty of the business. "The selection of the crests," according to one writer, "is left largely to the Newark concern. So great is the demand that one of the partners does nothing but hunt up coats-of-arms. He has all the books on heraldry and also endeavors to trace back his customers' ancestry far enough to find a tree and a family crest. It isn't an easy job. Half the would-be aristocrats have no trace of their great-grandfathers, while in nearly every instance the records disappear somewhere in the eighteenth century. Occasionally a clear case of family tree is developed, and then the search is easy and the crest is soon concocted."

A Chicago correspondent in referring to the dismissal of a number of conductors on the West Division street railway in that city, says: "Conductors on Chicago street railways wear a bell register hung around their necks which rings a bell in the passenger's hearing for every fare collected. The West Side conductors have had machines made to beat the register. It is a bell worn under the vest, of a louder tone, but of the same pitch as the register. It is called a 'brother in-law,' and is practically safe from detection by the ordinary observer. One conductor is know to have made $4 a day the year round by using it. The company does not know just how much it has lost by the 'brother-in-law,' but the sum must be considerable. The firm which has been making the machine will be prosecuted."

A very eminent London surgeon—one of the lights of the profession—the other day observed a gentleman fall into the street. He went to his aid, and found he had broken his leg. It was only a simple fracture, but the man was badly hurt. The surgeon used his umbrella as a splint, and with his own and borrowed handkerchiefs bandaged the limb tightly, put the patient in a cab and drove to the nearest hospital. There they were received by a young surgeon. "You've bandaged this very well," said the hospital surgeon. "You flatter me," said the great gun. "Not at all," said the other. —"I suppose you've been attending an ambulance class. They say a little learning is a dangerous thing, but the little you've learn't you've put to good account. I can't give you your umbrella now, but if you will leave your address it shall be sent home." "I had best give you my card," said the eminent surgeon. And he did so.

They do say, remarks a New York letter, that girls are nowadays taking very much to acting in private life. Ingenious false pretences of æsthetic occupations and tastes are declared to be common among unmarried belles who are seeking husbands. In extreme cases of positive wicked deceit, girls are known to procure professional artists' half finished paintings, which they display as their own work, which they dabble at in order to keep up appearances. The writer knows of a fair pretender to poetic talent who got a newspaper man to write for her a poem of about twenty verses. Then she copied the first two or three on a sheet of paper, and left it lying on the table in her boudoir. When a female chum came in for an unceremonious call the hostess would seem confused, and finally confess that she was trying her hand a little at composition. This device was repeated for a half a dozen of her friends. Then the succeeding verses were copied one after another, day by day, until the poem was in the course of a week completed. The observers imagined that they had witnessed its evolutions, and they spread the report that their friend was indeed a poetess.

There are a few men so obstinate in their atheism whom a pressing danger will not reduce to acknowledgement of the divine power.

A handsome complexion is one of the greatest charms a woman can possess. Pozzoni's Complexion Powder gives it.

Our Young Folks.

GILES' VENTURE.

BY H. GORDON.

IT was a dreary, tempestuous morning when Giles and Ben left their grandmother's cottage, and stepped out bravely across the bleak Scottish moor on their way to the cross-roads, where old Jarvie the carrier was to pick them up to convey them to the neighboring town some ten miles off.

The keen wind struck in their faces, and the three miles' trudge in the snow seemed more than usually tedious. Conversation was impossible, and they plodded along in silence, till at last they reached the meeting place where they generally awaited Jarvie.

The hooded wagon standing in the road, half embedded in snow, was a very welcome sight, though neither Jarvie nor horses were to be seen.

"They must have found it hard work to get along last," remarked Giles, "and I guess Jarvie took his horses off to Ellendean, thinking to come out again this morning. He must have known that nobody would be likely to come along in weather like this."

Giles' guess was near the truth. The boys gazed towards the horizon for some time, and then, as snow fell again, Ben suggested getting into the wagon till Jarvie came.

No sooner thought of than done. The van looked fairly cosy. Jarvie sometimes took no fares, having his own wares, and consequently a moveable house, and every inch of space was utilized. In one corner lay a blanket. All around were suspended various cooking utensils.

The boys piled up the parcels in the corner, and sat down contentedly to con their lesson books—"As happy as kings," said Benjy; and, what with the warmth and stillness after their stiff walk, both boys eventually fell fast asleep.

It was Giles at last who with a start woke up to the fact that it was growing dark, that snow was falling heavily, and that still no Jarvie had arrived.

"Heigho!" he said, with a stretch. "This is getting beyond a joke—looks like stopping here all night. No, no, you bide here, Benjy; you're a bit delicate, and will only get cold;" and, in spite of Ben's protestations, he plunged out into the darkness alone.

He seemed gone for ages and Ben was [illegible] when his straining ear caught the welcome sound of voices, and Giles clambered at last into the wagon, followed by—not Jarvie—but a fur-booted man, who held a bundle of something in his arms, and moved with great difficulty.

Once inside, the stranger sank with a groan on to the floor of the wagon. He had evidently lost his way in the snow, and, but for Giles' timely aid would probably have succumbed to cold and exhaustion.

Ben stood open-eyed whilst Giles gave the almost unconscious man some stimulant from Jarvie's little store, and gently drew from his convulsive clasp the bundle of wraps, out of which rolled a tiny sleeping boy.

The man's first thought was for his child's safety; his second to thank Giles warmly for his hospitable shelter, whilst he looked at both boys with a pair of piercing dark eyes.

He had long, thin features, and his face seemed not unfamiliar, though Giles could not remember ever having seen it before.

"You don't speak like natives of the place," said the stranger at last.

"No; we're southerns born," explained Giles, "but we live at Thorburn now for the schooling, and come over here once a fortnight to see our granny. She was once housekeeper at the Abbey, but she's old now, and times are changed."

"How's that?" said the stranger abruptly.

"The factor (manager), Mr. Macdougall, sees after everything now. He wants to turn granny out of her cot. He's a near man, [illegible], I'm sorry to say."

"I hear the laird's a hard man too," said the stranger.

"Just that be. But he's old now, and never been the same since he parted from his son years ago. They had words, I don't know the ins and outs of it all," said the loquacious Giles. "Anyhow, he's a broken-down old man. They say he'd do anything to get news of his son, but he's never heard of him from that day's end to this. He feels it bitterly."

"Ah," said the stranger, stroking the little sleeper's head. "No one knows a father's feelings until he's one himself." After which remark he fell into deep thought.

Outside, the wind howled, and the snow still fell. It would have been madness to attempt a walk across the moor after dark, so the boys set about making the place trim for the night. They pulled out Jarvie's blanket upon which the sleeping child was placed and lit the bull's-eye which hung upon a nail, and did duty for a lamp.

Giles triumphantly produced a loaf and sausage from Jarvie's secret store, off which they all made a meal. The boys rather enjoyed their adventure, but their companion seemed almost too ill to eat. After supper he talked a while. His knowledge of the locality puzzled Giles, who fell asleep with strange thoughts in his mind.

The stranger passed a very restless night. Giles heard him groan repeatedly, and once he started up muttering, "For Alan's sake."

When daylight came Giles lifted a corner of the tarpaulin, and looked out. The wagon was almost embedded in the snow. A very heavy mantle of white covered the moor, and not the vestige of a human being was to be seen.

Matters now began to look serious. Their small supply of food would soon run short.

The stranger's sunken appearance frightened Giles, who saw he alone was fit for any attempt at rescue. Their fate evidently hung on himself. The sick man looked at him imploringly.

"You will go," he gasped at last. It is our only chance. Try and get help from the nearest farm. And here, take these papers"—he produced a packet, on which, with great effort, he scrawled a few lines. "See that this is sent to the Abbey, and delivered to the laird—into his own hands, if you can. It is of the utmost importance. You are a brave lad, and, if you succeed, shall not repent it. I will never forget what I owe you, not for myself alone——"

He broke off suddenly, and then insisted upon Giles making a hearty meal before starting, and sent him off with the parting injunction, "Whatever you do, keep on walking. On no account sit down in the snow; it is certain death."

Giles would not hear of Benjy venturing too. With a few good-natured brotherly words of scolding and encouragement he buttoned up his coat, and pushing aside the tarpaulin, stepped on the road, and started off on his solitary, perilous expedition.

Giles purposed making a short cut across to his grandmother's cottage. He thought he knew the landmarks pretty well, but his first heedless step landed him in a snow-drift, and he had much ado in struggling out.

He then proceeded more cautiously, for all the ordinary helps were obliterated, and he often had to toil up to his middle in snow. It was weary, exhausting work. After a while his limbs began to ache bitterly; his feet and hands lost all sensation; and, to make matters worse, the snow again fell heavily, striking him in the face, and making it impossible to see his whereabouts.

He had many a fall and many a bruise, and, after an unusually severe one, would fain have lain where he had fallen. But he resisted the impulse, and kept gallantly on, remembering the stranger's injunction. What disheartened him most was that he had evidently missed his way, and, though walking for hours, there was no sign of habitation round.

The fact was that, in turning a somersault in the snow, he had lost his bearings, and, on rising, he set off walking in an exactly opposite direction, executing a sort of circle such as is frequently done by wanderers in the bush.

The day wore on, and as darkness fell poor sturdy Giles began to realize the hopelessness of his mission. Oh, for a sight of some living soul across the dreary moor!

The solitude was simply appalling. And now painful stories of travellers lost in the snow thronged his mind, and when he thought of all depending on him, of the old Abbey laird, of the prodigal's return—for Giles had guessed the stranger's secret—and of the anxious little party in the wagon awaiting relief, he could have cried in a very despair.

The snow looked so tempting, and he was so tired. His very faculties seemed to be freezing up.

Consciousness almost deserted him, but not the instinct of moving. And so he toiled on and on, till he stood on the brink of a [illegible] ravine, veiled in snow.

Would no Providence interpose a saving hand? Poor, blinded, groping Giles stumbled against a stone, lost his footing, and rolled over, bounding from ledge to ledge, until he found a resting-place at the bottom of six feet of snow.

Was it all a hideous dream—a nightmare? When Giles became conscious once more he found himself in a strange but cozy little room, with his grandmother's kindly withered face bending over him, whilst Benjy stood at her elbow with anxious eyes. Giles shut his eyes, and tried not to think, but thought was too vivid. He opened them again, and said, "How did I get here?"

Benjy gave a cry of joy.

"You were found yesterday," he said, "at the foot of Marba dip—*miles* away. Mr. Macdougall was looking out, and saw something black shoot down the ravine. The snow broke your fall; it was nothing short of a miracle. They carried you into his house, and when he found the packet in your pocket it was taken immediately to the Abbey; and whom do you think the stranger turned out to be but the laird's own son! A relief party was sent out directly, with lanterns and shovels and litters. They got out only just in time, and took us all back to the Abbey—me too," said Benjy; "and the laird patted me on the head, and said it was the gallantest thing that he had heard for ever so long—your walk I mean—and that I ought to be proud to have such a brother, and so I am. Aren't you, granny?"

The worthy dame wiped her eyes.

"To think the laird should owe it to you, my laddie," she said, "my ain flesh and blude, I wad that your puir father had been alive; he'd have been sae proud of his son. The laird says he'll never forget what he owes you."

The laird was as good as his word. Giles never had cause to regret the sufferings he went through that winter's day; and the happiness which he was the means of bringing to the Abbey radiated its lights also into the humble cottage home.

KING OBERON.

BY S. M. BOSLEY.

THE king of the fairies took a tour around his dominions one night in happy spring time. There was a moon, of course, for his majesty does not love darkness and if no stars twinkle or silver light shimmers over the world after nightfall, he lies snugly tucked into his resting place and waits. Now the king and his train were in wonderful spirits as they tripped, danced, or flew along as the fancy took them, for the air was filled with sweetness from the white May-blossoms, and the sun had shown so warmly all day that the little fairy folk could not complain of being chilly.

How fair the flowers looked in their meadow home! some standing with tightly folded petals, some drooping their delicate heads, while others slept wide-open eyes. Along one side of the meadow ran a brook, in which a few weeks later forget-me-nots were to open their pink-tinged buds, and flags stood on the marshy ground close by, like a regiment of guards drawn up to keep watch over the fair sleepers around.

"My Queen," cried King Oberon, "this is a night such as we fairies love; let us do something to keep it in memory, something that may give pleasure to and win gratitude from others. What shall it be?"

"Suppose we honor the humblest of these sleepers with a crown of diamonds!" said the queen. "We will hear what they have to say at our pass judgment to-morrow."

"Well said, my lovely Titania," and their majesties swept on, for they were bound for a grassy glade in the wood near at hand, there to hold high revel among the budding trees.

Now Madam Buttercup was wide awake, and not a word missed her ears. She smiled and drew herself up with a shake of her golden cups. "For," thought she, "surely I must win the crown. I truly am among the humblest of created things, and children love me for the bright burnishing of my flowerets. Dandelion is a vulgar fellow; coltsfoot is over till next season; centaury I am rather afraid of, knowing she is useful, and I've noticed that those who are of the most use in the world seem to think least of what they do."

At this point the thinker's meditation was cut short by a tiny voice at her foot.

"May I crawl into your bosom for rest and safety? There are enemies abroad, and I am weary of flight."

Buttercup looked down to see the scarlet and black coat of a ladybird. "Certainly not!" was the tart reply. "Go to daisy or dandelion if you will. I love not beetles of any sort."

"Ay; and I love you not either," murmured ladybird herself, as she turned away; "you are selfish and bitter. We shall know what to say if the king appeal to us."

Morning came and the cows were turned into the meadow from another close by, and her fear turned to joy.

"Ah!" cried she; "they know better than to kill me. I shall live to wear the crown."

Towards sundown King Oberon sent messengers to collect reports from the flowers before they fell asleep, and ladybird happened to be one of them because she flew by night or day, though many of her tribe are only active during the former.

"What shall I say of you?" she inquired of dandelion. "What can you do in return for the gift of life?"

"Very little," was the answer. "Bees hover about me for honey; and poor folk make me into tea."

"And what of you?" asked ladybird, pausing on the broad rounded leaves of coltsfoot. "I know your flowers have done their duty for this year, but that is no reason you should lose the king's reward.

"We are unworthy of it," murmured the leaves." Crowns would ill become us; still, we must speak in the interests of our absent flowers. In Scotland, folk say, mattresses are stuffed with our seeds; then we are rolled up into what the poor fondly think is tobacco to fill their clay pipes, and our blossoms are reported to be good for coughs when brewed in boiling water."

"Well done; you are a useful plant and modest to boot," was the reassuring rejoinder. "I must question others, but doubt if they can plead better claims to the reward. Centaury, what have you to say for yourself?"

The star-like blossoms of this plant were closing as ladybird spoke. She flushed a brighter pink as she said simply—

"I can boast of no sweet scent like coltsfoot, nor of half of dandelion's good actions. Old women who are too poor to pay doctor's bills, or believe most in their cures, gather me to make strengthening medicine."

Madam Buttercup waited impatiently for her turn and then bowed meekly to ladybird, for she thinking it was the same who had asked for shelter only the night before.

"Ahem!" said the messenger, pausing in front of the proud flower. "I think we saw each other not long ago?"—here the buttercup started, for the possible truth flashed across her—"I come to ask what you do to deserve life?"

The listen was nettled by the tone, but she answered readily, "I am far more beautiful than my neighbors, and my use is to stand here that others may gaze at me. Children delight to pluck me, and the very cattle turn aside when——"

"Hold your tongue!" broke in ladybird, no longer able to hide her impatience. "Your vanity is only equalled by your ignorance, to begin with; for could you look a trifle farther than that marshy bend near the brook, you would see a crowd of glorious king-cups at least three times as big as your vaunted blossoms, and quite as bright. You say children delight to pluck you—perhaps so because they are attracted by showy colors, and do not always inquire if real merit goes with them. Cattle spare you—yes, but it is because you have a bitter flavor which is liked by none. You are vain, you are hopelessly selfish, Madam Buttercup; and not only would a crown ill become you, but it would be wasted, since you are doomed to perish. Nothing useless is allowed to exist in a world where all was created to be and to do good. Remember this when your reward is given, for this is the reason."

Buttercup stood petrified by mingled feelings of disappointment, rage and fright. When she found breath and voice again the speaker was far away, and there was a joyous hum in the air.

"Nonsense, rubbish!" muttered the flower. "I believe these crowns are after all nothing more than dew, which the king has no power to give or take away. No doubt then the others will be crowned, and I shall live to rejoice at sunrise with the rest."

Poor foolish thing before a couple of hours had passed a careless foot had trampled her to the earth, and the man who had thus fulfilled ladybird's warning went on whistling.

Once more the royal train crossed the meadow on its way to the wood, and Oberon as he went touched lightly with his wand each sleeping flower. Titania added gentle words to the king's act, and though some did not hear, others were awake to catch the kindly greeting. "Bravely done," said she; "receive the reward you have earned, and let it encourage you to do yet more."

When the sun rose in a sky of cloudless blue each wild flower stood crowned with a glittering coronet of diamonds, and a few in their humility bent their heads under the precious gift. All except buttercup, who murmured sadly as she lay crushed to earth. "Nothing useless is allowed to exist. Oh! that the past could come back, for I know that a little meekness, a little kindness is better far than beauty, and I would do my utmost to find some way of doing good."

THE SCOTLAND DUCK. There had been a wet [illegible] summer, and the kitchen-garden looked [illegible] ever, after the [illegible] flood. The pools of peas were full and [illegible], and the cabbages and cauliflowers [illegible] the worst for [illegible].

A [illegible] slug, who with scores of [illegible] and [illegible] from their hiding-places, was feasting on the pink heart of a beautiful summer cabbage. "A—h," said he with a deep sigh of contentment, "I really feel as if I can eat no more. How delicious are all these good things! I suppose they were all made expressly for us slugs."

"Dolly," cried the farmer's wife, "just let all the ducks out for a run in the kitchen-garden. They will pick off those nasty snails and slugs finely."

Out rushed the greedy ducks, and amongst them one fine fat speckled creature, quacking loudly with delight, and waddled under the very cabbage on which was our slug.

The slug had eaten and eaten till he was quite tall, and could hardly crawl, and down he fell plump at the feet of the duck, who gobbled him up in a moment.

"Oh, what a luscious morsel!" said the duck. "Slugs and snails were made on purpose for us ducks, that's certain."

The next day was Midsummer fair, and at breakfast the farmer said to his wife, "Mary, I'm going to bring Cousin Joe and his wife home in the cart from market to dine with us. Give us some roast ducks and green peas, and a gooseberry tart."

So two of the fattest ducks were killed, and our duck was one of them. She did not long survive the slug, for just as she had eaten him she was now eaten herself by the farmer and his friends.

We should remember that the good things of this world were not made for ourselves alone but for everyone; and we should endeavor to use them wisely, since we must all one day leave them behind us.

A. H. B.

AS PRONOUNCED.—The inconsistencies of English spelling are manifest. "Ph" for example, stands for "f" in the word "phonograph," "ough" does duty for "o" in "dough," "put" is equivalent to "t" in "pudding," "eigh" is a roundabout way of writing "a" in "gazette;" and "eau" equals "o" in "beau." If one wants to assemble all these inconsistencies, one may spell "potato" thus, "ghoughphtheightteau."

"You say, Mr. Smith," said a little girl, in a low, thoughtful, this-is-a-serious-matter sort of tone, "that you have loved me for five years and have never dared to tell me so until to-night?" "Yes," he replied. "Well, I cannot be your wife. A man who has no more courage than that would feign to be asleep while a burglar stole his slippers."

CHARITY should never be brought down to the level of amusement. It should be looked upon as a duty, and as a sacred one that is given to us all, poor or rich, to be done to the best of our ability and means.

THERE is a time when men will not suffer bad things because their ancestors have suffered worse. There is a time when the heavy head of inveterate abuse will neither draw reverence nor obtain protection.

ANGRY words are fuel to the flame of wrath, and make it blaze fiercely.

HEAVEN.

Oh, Heaven is nearer than mortals think,
When they look, with a trembling dread,
At the misty future that stretches on
From the silent homes of the dead.

'Tis no lone isle in a boundless main,
No brilliant but distant shore,
Where the lovely ones, who are called away,
Must go to return no more.

Nay; Heaven is near us; the mighty veil
Of mortality blinds the eye,
That we cannot see the angel hands
On the shores of eternity.

Yet oft, in the hours of holy thought,
To the thirsting soul is given
That power to pierce through the mist of sense
To the beauteous scenes of Heaven.

Then very near seem its pearly gates,
And sweetly its harpings fall;
Till the soul is restless to soar away,
And longs for the angel-call.

I know, when the silver-cord is loosed,
When the veil is rent away,
Not long and dark shall the passage be
To the realms of endless day.

The eye that shuts in a dying hour,
Will open the next in bliss!
The welcome will sound in a heavenly world,
Ere the farewell is hushed in this.

We pass from the clasp of mourning friends,
To the arms of the loved and lost;
And those smiling faces will greet us then,
Which here—we have valued most.

THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADES.

There were no less than three of those movements called children's crusades; the first in 1212, the second in 1237, and the third in 1458.

The first is the one usually referred to as the children's crusade, because it far surpasses the others in magnitude and importance. It consisted of two distinct movements. At about the same time, in the early summer of 1212, two immense armies of children were gathered at Cologne in Germany and at Vendome in France, in response to the summons of boy prophets, who believed, or affected to believe, themselves inspired by heaven. The majority of these children were boys, but there were thousands of girls with them also.

The prophet-leaders are known to history as Stephen of Cloys (France) and Nicholas of Cologne, both boys about twelve years of age. The crusade which they preached was not a crusade of blood against the fierce Saracen, but a crusade of prayer. The children were to march to the sea, which would open as it once did for the Israelites, to permit them to pass over to Palestine dryshod. There they would convert the leaders of Islam, baptise the heathen, and by prayer and faith accomplish what the armored hosts of kings and knights had failed to do.

The excitement aroused by this preaching spread among the children of all classes like a plague, and no remonstrance, tears, or even force on the part of parents and guardians had any effect in checking the epidemic.

If they were locked up to keep them from joining the followers of the boy prophets, the little ones had either died in convulsions or pined to death in hopeless melancholy; their natural affection for home and parents seeming to have been utterly destroyed by the prevalent mania.

Nor was the frenzy confined to the children of the poorer classes, or the bourgeoisie only; it reached the houses of the nobility also, and drew from their ancestral castles the heirs of knights and barons.

Finally, a cry of heresy was raised against all who attempted or desired to check the mania by strong measures, and superstition and fanaticism combined to rob all parents of their just authority.

Within short intervals of each other, two unarmed hosts of German children—nearly all of them under twelve years of age, and many of them girls—left Cologne to march over the sea to the Holy Land. The first was led by the famous Nicholas; the second by a boy who is not known. Their combined numbers are believed to have been 40,000. In the same month another army of French children left Vendome, on the same crusade, under Stephen; this numbered 30,000.

The German children crossed the awful Alpine passes—which great generals had never traversed without terrible difficulty—and descended into Italy to gain the sea; Nicholas crossing the path at Mt. Cenis; the other leader that of Mt. St. Gothard. The losses of the former army between Cologne and Italy were 18,000 children; those of the latter were 17,000. The French army had lost 10,000 of its number before it reached Marseilles, heat and hunger strewing its path with corpses. Probably of the 70,000 children who joined this crusade less than 20,000 was ever heard of afterwards by their parents. Most of those who survived were those who could not keep up with the rest, but fell behind, and were cared for by the people of the districts through which they passed, and finally restored to their homes.

When the army of Nicholas reached Genoa, and found that the sea would not open to let them pass, there was a general breaking up. The humane Genoese cared for and fed the band of waifs, and offered to assist them all to return to their homes. Some, discouraged, accepted the kind offer; but the larger number passed on to Pisa, whence they passed on by ship to the Holy Land.

A part of the army of German children under the unknown leader also gained Brindisi, on the coast, and were thence, we are told, "shipped to Palestine." Those of these two bands who did not perish on the passage were sold as slaves to the Turks and Saracens.

Of the French children, 5,000 fared equally badly, for they were induced by cunning merchants of Marseilles "to take ship with them to the Holy Land," and all who survived the voyage were sold, like the German children, as slaves.

LANGUAGE OF THE FEATURES.—A pointed chin is said to be a sign of craftiness, wisdom and discretion. A soft, fat, double chin shows sensuousness and an indolent temperament. A flat chin shows a cold, hard nature; a small chin indicates weakness, want of will power, and cowardice. A retreating chin is a sign of silliness, and if the brow be shallow, of imbecility. Where the space between the nose and the red part of the lip is short and very sharply cut, it indicates refinement and delicacy of perception, but not much power. There is no force of intellect where this space is unusually short. A rather long but flat upper lip—especially where the serpentine line of the middle of the mouth is much defined, and the middle of the lip droops to the lower lip, and is very flexible—denotes an eloquent person. A very long upper lip which is flat, and which belongs to a straight, or formless, or too thick-lipped mouth, is a sign of a low vicious type of character. Almost all the faces of great criminals have this type, combined with massive jaws and high cheek bones, which last defect is a sign of rapacity. A square and massive chin shows strong and determined will. An old Italian writer says that "women with brown hairy moles on the chin, especially if these excrescences are on the under part of the chin, are industrious, active, and are good housewives; they are very sanguine, and are given to love follies. They talk much, and whilst they are easily excited to return a love which is offered them, they are not so readily prevailed upon to become indifferent."

Grains of Gold.

There are follies which are caught like contagious diseases.

By the very constitution of our nature moral evil is its own curse.

Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.

Amid all our ignorance and weakness what we best know is our duty.

To keep your secret is wisdom; but to expect others to keep it is folly.

Religion converts despair, which destroys, into resignation, which submits.

The dreariest poverty is that of the heart. Banish this, and we shall all be rich.

Evil report, like the Italian stiletto, is an assassin's weapon, worthy only of the bravo.

There are many more shining qualities in the mind of man, but there are none so useful as discretion.

Our passions are like convulsion fits, which, though they make us stronger for the time, leave us the weaker ever after.

"Do the duty which lies nearest thee," which thou knowest to be a duty! Thy second duty will already have become clearer.

There are many who talk on from ignorance rather from knowledge and who find the former an inexhaustible fund of conversation.

In the light of eternity we shall see that what we desire would have been fatal to us, and that what we would have avoided was essential to our well-being.

Femininities.

Silk gloves are promised with kid tips to the fingers.

Anger begins with folly, and ends with repentance.

A handsome design on a silver bonbonniere is a yacht of gold in full sail.

Let our lives be pure as snow fields, where our footsteps leave a mark, but no stain.

Some of the women of Paris have formed a league for the suppression of impure literature.

"A lady was lately hugged to death in Manchester"—another illustration of the power of the press.

Innocence is a flower which withers when touched, but blooms not again, though watered with tears.

Nothing does so much honor to a woman as her patience, and nothing does her so little as the patience of her husband.

You can't always judge the size of a man's bank account by the artistic beauty of the picture on the outside of his office safe.

One of the strong-minded sisters has published a card in which she announces that the American eagle is not a male bird, but a hen.

Girls used to be so timid that they would screech at the sound of a pistol-shot, but nowadays when they go buggy riding they usually go armed.

'Twas ever thus. Adam, just after getting acquainted with Eve: "Will you go with me to-night to see the animals?" Eve: "I have nothing to wear."

Happiness is not hard to attain. If you don't believe it, all you have to do is to watch two little girls, one at each end of a tilting see-saw plank.

The old, old story boiled down. She, early in the evening: "Good-evening, Mr. Sampson." Same she, late in the evening: "Good-night, George."

In a tete-a-tete a woman speaks in a loud tone to the man she is indifferent to, in a low tone to the one she begins to love, and keeps silent with the one she loves.

An engagement ring on the finger of a young lady is apt to be made conspicuous by the wearer. It is the same way with a scalp worn by an Indian in his belt.

The assertion is made that there are at least one hundred successful female "drummers" on the road, mainly representing firms in Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis and Louisville.

He: "You are holding that umbrella on the wrong side to protect you from the sun." She: "I know it, but there's that dreadful Miss Briggs, and I intend her to see my new spring bonnet."

In ancient days the most celebrated precept was, "Know thyself." In modern times it has been supplanted by the more fashionable maxim, "Know thy neighbor, and everything about him."

About 150 colors are now obtained from coal-tar, which have almost entirely supplanted vegetable and animal dyes. Indigo and logwood are the only two of the latter class considered of much importance.

Fashionable daughter: "Mamma, do you really think it is wrong for me to flirt in a mild sort of way?" Fashionable mother, horrified: "Clara, I'm surprised at you! The idea of an unmarried person flirting!"

Mme. Vincent, a Frenchwoman, has saved 12 persons from drowning. A short time ago she jumped into the waves entirely dressed and rescued the twelfth, a 6-year-old boy. She has 7 children of her own.

"I see," observed Mrs. Snaggs, "that the Sultan of Zanzibar left 27 widows." "Yes," replied Snaggs, heartlessly, "he ripened a heavy crop of weeds very suddenly." "That wasn't what I was thinking of. What I can't understand is how all those widows will get their thirds."

Miss Green: "Where did you graduate from, Mr. Gull?" Mr. Gull: "From the school of pharmacy." Miss Smith, with surprise: "Is it possible! What a strange choice for a young man brought up in the city! Ah, but if I remember correctly, your grandfather was a farmer, too."

Anderson goes home in the middle of the afternoon and finds the house locked up. "I declare," he exclaims to Richards, who accompanies him, "if my wife hasn't gone away without leaving me any way to get in." "Haven't you a key to the door?" asks his companion. "Yes; but, confound it! it's a night-key."

"Know that young lady at the piano, Mr. Blunt?" "Yes, I am slightly acquainted with her." "Well, I wish I was." "Why!" "I'd cultivate her until I knew her well enough to tell her she can't sing. Her voice reminds me of the cry of a fish hawker. Can't you introduce me?" "With pleasure. I am her father!"

"Doesn't it embarrass you to be kissed by your husband before a car full of people?" "Embarrass me?" replied the lady, who was starting off on a journey, as she seated herself comfortably in her seat and looked at the questioner. "Did John kiss me when he said good-bye? I declare I didn't notice it. Is my hat on straight, Laura?"

If the story in a Georgia paper is true, a woman in that State sat up late in the night recently to see a pail of cold water she had hung above the door overturn on her husband when he returned from the "club." She got tired and went to bed. In the morning she forgot all about the pail until she opened the door to admit her mother.

Miss Greene, a 16-year old girl, is the heroine of the hour in a town near Tower City, Dak. She entered a burning dwelling and, seizing two infants who were sleeping alone in one of the upper stories, attempted to reach the street via the stairway. As the latter was partly ablaze, she went down about half way, then tossed the children through and beyond the flames. When it was seen they were safe, she made a leap through the fire and was saved also, though considerably burned.

Masculinities.

He submits to be seen through a microscope who suffers himself to be caught in a fit of passion.

"A woman feels where man thinks," says an unidentified writer. Yes, and that's what makes him bald.

It is safer to affront some people than to oblige them; for the better a man deserves, the worse they will speak of him.

Inquisitive people are the funnels of conversation; they do not take in anything for their own use, but merely to pass it to another.

A hundred times more trouble is caused by men who can get work but won't work than by the men who want work but cannot get it.

The most intangible, and therefore the worst, kind of a lie is a half truth. This is the peculiar device of a "conscientious" detractor.

A wag says that it is proposed to alter the formula of the marriage service to "Who will dare to take this woman for his wedded wife?"

At the Husband Club. Brown: "Does your wife keep her temper very well?" Jones: "Um—um—er—some; but I get the most of it."

"Knock-around-and do nothing all-day" was the name a Kentucky father gave his son, which the last Legislature consented to change for him.

A man is more faithful to the secret of another than to his own; a woman, on the contrary, preserves her own secret better than that of another.

"Dis would be er diffunt worl' ef we all had our lives ter live ober ergin, but I doubts ef at de las' we would be any better prepared fur leabin it den we now am."

He that remembers not to keep the Christian Sab'bath at the beginning of the week will be in danger to forget before the end of the week that he is a Christian.

He who indulges his sense in any excesses renders himself obnoxious to his own reason; and, to gratify the brute in him, displeases the man, and sets his two natures at variance.

A chemist declares that wood can be made palatable and nourishing. When it comes into general use for food, and term "board" will have a doubly appropriate meaning.

One who describes himself as a much-tried married man, writes that the way to become practically acquainted with the Rule of Three, is to live with your wife, mother and mother-in-law.

Depend upon it, if a man talks of his misfortunes there is something in them that is not disagreeable to him; for where there is nothing but pure misery, there never is any recourse to the mention of it.

Swell: "I'm going to resign from my club." Friend: "I thought you liked it so much?" Swell: "Used to be all right, but society is getting too mixed. Why, I met my pawnbroker there the other night!"

A trade journal says that young men have almost unanimously discarded the frock or "Prince Albert" coat, although it still retains a moderate degree of popularity with stout and middle-aged men.

Near sighted hens are not so bad after all. Jones says he had one once that ate a quart of sawdust, supposing that it was meal, and then went off and laid a nestful of bureau knobs. But Jones is near-sighted himself.

"It is pretty lively at my house," said Mr. Twinsy, mournfully. "I've got a cold, my wife's got a cold, baby's got the measles, and my oldest daughter's got a piano. Which is the warmest outdoor seat to sleep in?"

"My friends admire me a great deal musically," said a young man who had never been prominent for self-conceit. "I didn't know that you sang." "I don't, and, what's more, I never try. That's why I am admired."

Men are not blindly betrayed into corruption, but abandon themselves to their passions with their eyes open; and lose the direction of Truth because they do not attend to her voice, not because they do not understand it.

"Going out again, Henry?" said Mrs. Blank, reproachfully; "there was a time when you and I were never so happy as when we were alone." "Well, what of that?" was the unfeeling reply. "I don't object to being alone now!"

The black swan was formerly thought to be a mere fiction; hence the force of the old saying, "An honest lawyer, a black swan." The latter having been found in Western Australia, it is to be hoped that the former also exists.

This is the age of championships, and Chicago, not to be outdone by other cities, comes to the front with a prize chicken-dresser, who claims that he can prepare 100 scalded chickens for the market in 13 minutes and 50 seconds.

Electric rifles are the latest. Instead of the ordinary percussion firing device a dry chloride of silver battery and a primary coil will, so it was lately stated before the American Institute, fire the rifle 35,000 times without recharging.

Mr Oldboy, a bachelor: "It's all over, Gussy, my boy. Miss Smith has refused me!" Gussy: "I suppose she let you down easy by promising to be a sister to you?" Mr. Oldboy, bitterly: "No, b' thunder; she said she'd be a daughter to me."

"Hallo, Smith, you look pale and thin. Been ill?" "I've been confined to my room for just a year. This is the first time I have been on the streets for 12 months." "What was the matter with you?" "Nothing; but my counsel couldn't make the jury think so."

A story which comes via San Marcia, N. M., from a Mormon settlement in the Luna Valley, is to the effect that two girls who had become rivals on account of their affection for a cow boy fought a duel, with the result that one of the belligerents was seriously wounded.

Recent Book Issues.

"Too Curious," by Edward J. Goodman. The title of this very remarkable book gives no clue to its contents, which are both novel and interesting. The hero becomes possessed of the gift of second-sight, and the woes which this rare gift entails are most graphically depicted. It is indeed a story with a moral, and that is, do not be "too curious" or desire to peer into the future. Price, 25 cents. Lippincott & Co.

All of F. Marion Crawford's stories are good, but there is not a better one—in any point of view—than "Marzio's Crucifix." The way in which the crucifix of the artisan is made the basis of a plot and incidents, at once original, strange, beautiful, entertaining, and withal good in tone, stamps this novelist among the leaders of fiction. It is the first volume of Macmillan's Summer Reading Library. Price, 50 cents.

Messrs. J. B. Lippincott & Co., of this city, have issued in their series of American novels, in paper covers, a volume containing two stories by Captain Charles King, U. S. A. They are "The Deserter," and "From the Ranks," and, as their titles indicate, are stories of military life. They are both spiritedly written, and the pictures they give of certain phases of existence on the frontier, are very graphic and realistic. Received from the publishers.

"From Lands of Exile," are a series of descriptive stories, or rather vivid word paintings, of events and scenes in China, Annam, and elsewhere in that region, by a French soldier, Pierre Loti. They are evidently portraits of facts, and are remarkable for their freshness, originality, and fullness of detail. A better idea of these far-off lands can be gleaned from these pages than from many works a dozen times its size. Goltsberger, New York, publisher. For sale by Porter & Coates. Price $1.00.

The latest volume of "Ticknor's Paper Series," that choice and favorite collection of admirable recent novels at low prices, is "Next Door," a story by the well-known author, Clara Louise Burnham. In the pure healthful sentiment which radiates from every paragraph, and its series of fine and sensitive character-sketches, piquant incidents, and bright humor, "Next Door," is an admirable and charming book. Price, 50 cents. Ticknor & Co., publishers, Boston and New York.

Dodd, Mead & Co, New York, are issuing a very handsome library edition of the earlier works of the popular English novelists, Walter Besant, and his colleague, whom he lost some years ago, James Rice. Two volumes, "The Golden Butterfly," and "My Little Girl," are already out in handsome dark binding, with gilt top, and printed in such clear type and on such excellent paper as make the reading of them a pleasure. The popularity of these writers is much more universal in England than it is here, but if in these days of too much commonplace realism, one wants romances tinged with humor and gilded with some of the most exquisite of word painting, it will be found in these stories. They seem to combine in themselves so wide a range of qualities that while the reader who delights in niceties of language, naturalness, and truth will find plenty to admire, the lover of incident, complicated plot, and oddity of character has also in them a well spread feast. They are by turns humorous, witty, sarcastic, pathetic, and poetic, but always pure and enjoyable. Price, $1.50 per volume.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The English Illustrated Magazine for May opens with a bright and exceedingly interesting paper which gives "Some Recollections of Kaiser Wilhelm," by G. M. Rhodes, illustrated with portraits of the Kaiser, Bismarck, von Moltke, and other pictures. The "Old English Home" described in this number is Hinchingbrook, belonging to the Earl of Sandwich. The paper on "Coaching Days and Coaching Ways" is the second about the Dover Road, profusely illustrated. Prof. W. Minto's serial, "The Meditation of Ralph Hardelot," has a generous instalment, and the opening chapters of a new serial, by Agnes C. Maitland, give promise of a highly interesting story. Macmillan & Co., New York.

Wide Awake for May presents a splendid variety of reading for the young people, including stories, adventures by land and sea, biography, travel, delightful fairy literature, poetry, etc. The illustrations are profuse and of fine artistic workmanship. The frontispiece is a beautiful picture representing Queen Louise and her sons—the late Emperor William and Frederick William IV.—from a painting by Steffeck, done when these affectionate sons were boys. The paper about "The Children of the White House" in this number, tells of the family of James Madison, with eighteen illustrations. Many of the young people's favorite writers are represented in this number. D. Lothrop & Co., Boston.

Snug Little Fortunes

may be had by all who are sufficiently intelligent and enterprising to embrace the opportunities which occasionally are offered them. Hallett & Co., Portland, Maine, have something new to offer in the line of work which you can do for them, and live at home, wherever you are located. Profits immense and every worker is sure of over $5 a day; several have made over $50 in a single day. All ages; both sexes. Capital not required; you are started free; all particulars free. You had better write to them at once.

The Pastor of St. Agathy.

BY S. U. W.

IN the most remote and unknown part of one of the French departments, there existed in 1793 a little village of poor peasants under the name and patronage of St. Agathy. It contained about forty houses, which might more properly be called huts, for their roofs were composed of reeds and straw, and their walls was a miserable union of woodwork and clay.

There lived here, however, a community distinguished both for simplicity of manners and firmness of religious principle. Its pastor had taken his post here at the age of twenty-five, and had ever since shared the joys and sorrows of his flock, living like themselves, in a miserable hut, satisfied with the same meagre fare, and doing his duty in every respect, with that faithful zeal which only a deep inward piety can stimulate.

Thus he had spent fifty years, and had won the hearts of all his parishioners, who loved and reverenced him as a father. He had, during this time, declined all propositions for bettering his position; partly from love of those under his charge, partly from fear that no other pastor would remain long in such a poor parish; and, therefore he became old on the same spot, amid the same poverty, doing all the good he could in his narrow sphere, for which he felt himself richly rewarded by the childlike love of his little flock.

As the French revolution broke out, the pastor began to fear that neither he or his flock would be spared from the all-visiting storm.

One day he received orders from the chief of police of the department to swear to what was then called the civil constitution of the clergy, or to give up immediately his post, and quit his parish.

The good man was so little acquainted with political matters, that he did not know at first what was required him; but as a copy of the constitution accompained the order, he lost no time in studying its contents, and came to the conviction that he could neither acknowledge nor swear to it.

Still less did he think himself bound to obey the orders by leaving the parish. He continued, therefore, to remain at St. Agathy and to perform his clerical offices as if nothing uncommon had happened, believing himself acting according to his duty and conscience.

Meanwhile, this measure, to which many other clergymen also refused to conform, began to create troubles, particularly in the Department of the West.

After the authorities had forcibly removed many of the opposing clergymen, the discontented parishes united themselves in a formal alliance, and prepared to defend themselves by arms against all violence. Thus was developed, by degrees, an insurrection, which from a mere spark became a raging flame.

The National Convention, informed of the state of things, ordered out troops to restore tranquility wherever it was disturbed.

Commissaries were appointed with full powers. Such a commissary came to Niort, the chief place of the department in which St. Agathy was situated.

This man was of a cruel nature, and believed himself bound to act with severity against all who resisted. He ordered all insubordinate clergymen to be taken prisoners, putting a price upon the head of such as could not be found.

The pastor of St. Agathy could evidently not escape the proscription, and one evening accordingly the news spread, and the next day a company of soldiers was to come from Niort, to take him prisoner.

The communal council immediately assembled. Of resistance there could be no question, as it would have been useless. Yet the worthy pastor, whose safety was the subject of universal anxiety, could not be forsaken. It was, therefore, resolved to bring him to a place of safety, which had already been found out.

He opposed at first, and he would willingly endure whatever Heaven had ordained for him. He suffered himself, however, finally to be led by his faithful parishioners to a coal-hut in the forest, where four armed men remained with him, both to prevent him from delivering himself up voluntarily, and to defend him in case of necessity.

The following day eighty soldiers, with two cannons, made their appearance at the village, to get possession of the weak old man.

The leader of the troops made the inhabitants acquainted with the object of his visit, and demanded of them, in the name of law, to deliver up their pastor, without hesitation.

As the command was not obeyed, the soldiers began a search. They searched every room and corner of the parsonage, but in vain—broke open the doors of the church, ravaged and desecrated every part of it, but found not what they sought; and finally went again from house to house, but all to no purpose.

The priest of St. Agathy was now declared criminal before the law, and the price of twenty thousand francs set upon his head. The whole village was then set on fire, and amid the desolation they had produced, marched forth the soldiers to the sound of the drum and fife.

Towards evening the pastor was informed that the danger was past; but he did not know what price his parishioners had paid for his safety. He returned with those who accompanied him, not to the village of St. Agathy, but to the smoking ruins where it had once been.

No words can express the deep pain he felt as he saw the desolation of the scene, in which the families to whom he had so long administered were gathered in the open air, robbed of their all. With streaming eyes he reproached them for not having hindered so great a misfortune.

"Would it not have been better to have delivered the old man of three-score and ten, who has at the most but a short time to live, and thus have saved the rest?"

They answered him that he was the father of the community and that good children should shun no sacrifice for their father. He rejoined that such a sacrifice was worthy of equal love, and that he hoped to show them on his part what he was able to do for his children.

Three days after, as the commissary, or *representant* of the convention, sat in his cabinet at Niort, an old bald-headed man was led before him, supported upon a stick, his shoes covered with dust, and wearing the gown of a priest, sadly worse for the wear. The old man approached and said:

"Citizen representant, you have made known at St. Agathy that twenty thousand francs will be given to him who shall deliver up the head of the pastor of that village. I am ready to earn the price."

Much as the representative was acquainted with the baseness of men, he was yet astonished at such a proposition from a man who was himself evidently so near his own end.

"Priest," said he, "thou makest me a proposition, which for a man of thy age and profession, must fill me with astonishment."

"Not so much as you think! Do you accept my offer?"

"Who art thou, that thou wilt sell the life of thy fellow-priest?"

"What has that to do with the matter, if I only keep my word? I ask you again, do you accept my offer?"

"I accept it, but may the blood shed fall upon thy head!"

"Be it so—you will pay me the sum promised?"

"Thou shalt have it."

"Can you not add something to it?"

"Thou old miser, dost thou not find thyself well enough paid for thy baseness!"

"Well, well, we will let it stand at twenty-thousand francs. I have one thing still to remark. You must promise me to let me use the money as I wish."

"As soon as thou hast received thy reward it is thy property, and thou canst do with it what thou wilt."

"I know that; but I have my reasons for being particular on this point."

"Little as I see thy reasons, I give thee my word of honor that no difficulties shall be raised that would affect thee in laying out the money."

"That is enough. I am myself the pastor of St. Agathy, and deliver myself into your hands. Give me now the money."

"You are!" exclaimed the representative, in surprise.

"I am," answered the old man calmly.

"What do you wish to do with this money? And do you know the punishment that awaits you?"

"I know all that, and your threats are superfluous. Let me now receive the promised sum, and be brought once more to my parishioners at St. Agathy."

"What do you wish to do there?"

"You will learn that. I have performed my promise; now perform yours."

"It shall be done."

The representative ordered twenty thousand francs, in assignats, to be paid over to the old man, who, after putting them in his pocket, repeated his wish to be brought once more to the ruins of his desolated parish.

The inhabitants of St. Agathy, had been filled with the greatest uneasiness at the sudden disappearance of their pastor.

As they went to call him one morning to prayer, they found the hut, which they had built in haste for him, empty, and they had sought him everywhere in vain, till finally they saw him coming in a wagon, escorted by soldiers.

Old and young rushed to meet him, lifted him from the wagon, surrounded him, and kissed his hands and the hem of his gown. After the first salutations were over, he addressed them as follows:

"You have been discontented with me, my dear children, and have thought I had left you without a farewell and without thanks; but it is not so. Friends who have lived together in joy and sorrow fifty years, do not part thus. I had some business to do at Niort, and, as I feared you would not agree to my journey there, I went without your knowledge. My business is now arranged according to my wish, and I come back to speak a word of confidence with you. To save the life of a weak old man, you have sacrificed all that you possessed. It is my duty to be thankful to you for it, and I bring you, therefore, the means to repair the loss. In this pocket-book are twenty thousand francs, which you can share among you in proportion to the loss you have suffered. Ask not how I have received this money; that is a secret which will hereafter be known. I must return with the men who have brought me here; but we shall surely see each other again, sooner or later. When, I cannot exactly say. Until that time, remain as you ever have been, industrious, honest, and pious, and at peace with each other, as becomes good children. Love one another brotherly, live in the fear of the Lord, and forget not your old pastor, whom you will all see again where there is peace and rest, undisturbed by the storms of life. Kneel down, my children, that I may give you my blessing."

At these words all fell upon their knees, even the hard-hearted soldiers themselves. The old man raised his eyes towards heaven, clasped his hands upon his breast, and called down the blessing of the Almighty, both upon his friends and his enemies.

After closing his prayers, he turned and said to the soldiers that formed his escort:

"Gentlemen, I am now at your service."

They put him again upon the wagon and drove back to Niort, the whole parish following behind.

He was not given up to the executioner. The representative would not take the responsibility of executing such a noble old man, but sent him to Nantes, where, however, three months after, he found a martyr's death in the waves of the Loire.

The village of St. Agathy was never rebuilt. The families who had composed it, and who were long in uncertainty about the fate of their pastor, became separated, and settled in different neighboring places, and the ploughshare now passes over the hallowed spots where their infancy was cradled, and where the bones of their forefathers rest.

ODD ANSWERS.

The courts of law have furnished us at various times with very witty and amusing remarks, lawyers and prisoners alike being guilty on this score. Doubtless everyone has heard of the Irishmen, who, in reply to the question, "Guilty or not guilty?" said, "he would like to hear the evidence before he would plead." A magistrate in another case was dealing with a vagrant and in a severe tone addressed him thus: "You have been up before me half-a-dozen times this year;" thereby giving him to understand that he had appeared too often on the scene. The prisoner, however, was equal to the occasion, for he replied: "Come, now, judge—none of that. Everytime I've been here, I've seen you here. You are here more than I am. People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones."

"Prisoner at the bar," said a judge, "is there anything you would wish to say before sentence is passed upon you?" The prisoner looked toward the door, and remarked that, he would like to say "Good evening," if it was agreeable to the company.

A good story is told of a general and his wife, resident in Ireland, who were constantly pestered by a beggar woman to whom they had been very generous. One morning at the accustomed hour, when the lady was getting into her carriage, the old woman began: "Agh! my lady, success to your ladyship, and success to your honor's honor, this morning, of all the days in the year, for sure didn't I drame last night that her ladyship gave me a pound of tay, and yer honor gave me a pound of tobacco!" "But, my good woman," said the general, "do you not know that dreams always go by the rule of contrary?" "Do they so, plase your honor?" rejoined the old woman. "Then it must be yer honor that will give the tay, and her ladyship that will give me the tobacco."

While dealing with the Emerald Isle, we may be allowed to quote several other equally witty and amusing replies, such as could only proceed from a warm-hearted son of Erin. It is said that when Sir Richard Steele was asked how it happened that his countrymen made so many bulls he replied: "It is the effect of the climate, sir: if an Englishman was born in Ireland, he would make as many." He was, therefore—perhaps intentionally—guilty of making a bull while seeking to explain their origin.

An American and an Irishman were once riding together, and coming across an old gallows by the wayside, Jonathan thought he would have some fun at Paddy's expense. "You see *that*, I calculate," said he, pointing to the gallows. "Now, where would you be if the gallows had its due?" Paddy replied: "Riding alone."

Another Irishman was observed writing a letter in a very large hand, and when questioned as to why he employed such large characters, replied: "Arrah, dear, an' isn't it to my poor mother I'm writing? An' she is so very deaf that I'm writing her a loud letter." "Come down this instant!" said a boatswain to a mischievous son of Erin who had been idling in the main-top "Come down, I say, and I'll give you a round dozen!" "Troth, sir, and I wouldn't come down if you'd give me two dozen." Another seafaring Irishman was engaged hauling a rope into a small boat, when the captain of the ship, who was on the poop, ordered him to "bear a hand." The captain then took a turn on deck, but on his return, Barney was still working on the line. "Why, haven't you reached the end yet?" cried the captain. "No, indeed, master; and, in truth, I've been looking for the end till I'm beginning to think it has got none. I do, sir, somebody has cut it off!"

HE WAS FORGIVING.—A little boy had been extremely naughty at dinner, and had been sent away from the table just as his favorite dish—cabinet pudding, with sweet sauce—was being served. About 9 o'clock that evening, when the other children had gone to bed, and his parents were alone in the sitting-room, a tearful little face and a white-robed figure appeared at the door.

"Mamma," it said, bravely, between sobs, "you told me never to go to sleep when anything wrong had been done until it was all put right, so I came down to tell you that—that—that—I—forgive you and papa for what you did to me at the dinner-table!"

WHO will not give some portion of his ease, his blood, his wealth, for others' good, is a poor frozen churl.

Humorous.

'TAIN'T SO.

Don't believe that the world is goin' to the dogs—
'Tain't so!
That all women are peacocks and all men are hogs.
'Tain't so!
An' if any man tells you the world to despise,
An' the honor of all men is sold for a price,
Look straight in his eyes and just tell him he lies!
'Tain't so!
For he thinks that the world is fashioned awry
And made from the pattern they cut him out by!

—U. N. None.

A Job lot—Boils.

Faithful to the end—A dog's tail.

A nod fellow—A sleepy bachelor.

Crash in the dry goods business—Toweling.

To remove paint from door-posts—Back up against it when it is fresh.

There may be nothing new in the world, but there's a great deal that's fresh.

The undertaker may not boast of his athletics, but he's something of a boxer.

Those parties who cannot stick to their word of honor ought to swear "by gum."

It is a singular fact that the man who is always in a pickle doesn't preserve his temper.

"How is the earth divided?" asked the professor of a Junior girl. "By earthquakes, sir," she answered.

"Mamma," said a little Chicago girl. "Yes, dear." "Do you think I'll have the same papa all this year?"

"I'll always take your part, sis," as the boy said when he robbed his little sister of her portion of the gingerbread.

A music dealer says that the violin has not been improved since 1720. The same may also be said of the violin player who lives next door.

Flossie, aged 4: "Bobby, why do they call ministers doctors?" Bobby, a lad of considerable information: "'Cos they make folks better."

Magistrate—"So you admit having been engaged in making counterfeit money?" Prisoner—"Yes, your honor: you see the supply of the genuine article is so very, very short."

She, playing: "I fear, Mr. Sniggles, my music is too poor to give you enjoyment." He, assuringly: "Oh, indeed, I do enjoy it. It doesn't take much to please me in the way of music, you know."

Teacher: "What part of speech is the word 'egg'?" Boy, hesitatingly: "Noun, sir." Teacher: "Is it masculine, feminine, or neuter?" Boy, looking sharp: "Can't say, sir, till it's hatched."

A gentleman returning home at a late hour is asked for alms by a mendicant. "What do you mean by begging in the streets at this hour of the night?" "Don't worry about me. I always carry a latch-key."

Young husband: "Er—what kind of cake is this, my dear?" Young wife: "Marble cake, Algernon. Isn't it nice?" Y. H.: "Splendid. If there was enough of it it would make a nice front for a public building."

The wasp lies in a torpid state through the cold months, but when the warm spring sunshine puts new life into all nature he comes forth with merry song, hunts up a bonfire, heats his stinger and is ready for business in early May.

Jones: "Yes, sir; it is mighty hard to collect money just now, I know it." Smith: "Indeed! Have you tried to collect and failed?" Jones: "Oh, no." Smith: "How, then, do you know that money is hard to collect?" Jones: "Because several people have tried to collect of me."

Little Mary was obliged to stay at home from school on account of sickness. Her mother tried to amuse her by telling her stories about her own childhood, and succeeded so well that the little girl said: "Oh, mamma, I wish I had been born sooner, so that I might have played with you when you were little."

"John," said the minister to the sexton, "that pulpit cushion is worn out. I wish you would see that a new cover is put on it." "Yes, sir," said John, grimly; "I know it's wore out, an' it's the third this year. It ain't my place to make remarks, sir, but in my opinion there is such a thing as carryin' religion a leetle too far."

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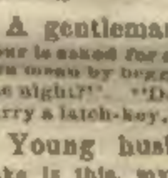

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CHINESE PROVERBS.

The Chinese are remarkably fond of proverbs. They not only employ them in conversation—and even to a greater degree than the Spaniards, who are noted among Europeans for the number and excellence of their proverbial sayings—but they have a practice of adorning their reception-rooms with those sententious bits of wisdom, inscribed on decorated scrolls or embroidered on rich crapes and brocades. They carve them on door-posts and pillars, and emblazon them on the walls and ceilings in gilt letters.

The following are a few specimens of this sort of literature: As a sneer at the use of unnecessary force to crush a contemptible enemy, they say, "He rides a fierce dog to catch a lame rabbit." Similar to this is another, "To use a battle-axe to cut off a hen's head."

They say of wicked associates, "To cherish a bad man is like nourishing a tiger; if not well fed he will devour you."

Here are several others, mingling wit with wisdom: "To instigate a villain to do wrong is like teaching a monkey to climb trees;" "To catch fish and throw away the net," which recalls our saying, "Using the cat's paw to pull the chestnuts out of the fire."

"To climb a tree to catch a fish," which is to talk much to no purpose. "A superficial scholar is a sheep dressed in a tiger's skin;" "A cuckoo in a magpie's nest," which is equivalent to "He is enjoying another's labor without compensation;" "If the blind lead the blind they will both fall into the pit;" "A fair wind raises no storm;" "Vast chasms can be filled, but the heart of man is never satisfied;" "The body may be healed, but the mind is incurable;" "He seeks the ass, and lo! he sits upon him;" "He who looks at the sun is dazzled; he who hears the thunder is deafened"—i.e., do not come too near the powerful "Prevention is better than cure;" "Wine and good dinners make abundance of friends, but in adversity not one of them is to be found;" "Let every man sweep the snow from before his own door, and not trouble himself about the frost on his neighbor's tiles."

The following is a gem of moral wisdom: "Only correct yourself on the principle by which you correct others; and excuse others on the principles on which you excuse yourself;" "Better not be than be nothing;" "One thread does not make a rope; one swallow does not make a summer;" "Sensuality is the chief of sins; filial duty the best of acts;" "The horse's back is not so safe as the buffalo's"—the former is used by the politician, the latter by the farmer; "Too much levity multiplies crime;" "If you love your son give him plenty of the rod; if you hate him cram him with dainties." "He is my teacher who tells me my faults; he my enemy who speaks of my virtues."

Having a wholesome dread of litigation, they say of one who goes to law, "He sues a flea to catch a bite."

Their equivalent for our "Coming out at the little end of the horn" is, "The further the rat creeps up the cow's horn the narrower it grows."

The truth of their saying, that "The fame of good deeds does not leave a man's door, but his evil acts are known a thousand miles off," is illustrated in our daily papers every morning.

Finally, we close this list with a Chinese proverb which should be inscribed on the lintel of every door in Christendom, "The happy-hearted man carries joy for all the household."

THE ENGAGEMENT RING.—It's funny to see the different ways in which various men select engagement rings, and when a man goes in for that purpose every clerk in the store can recognize the fact at once. Of course he has only come in to look at some watches or a pair of sleeve buttons, but the very manner in which he avoids the ring case betrays him at once. After a few minutes, when he feels a little more at his ease, he usually takes the clerk into his confidence and asks to be shown some solitaires. If it's his first venture and he doesn't feel quite sure of his ground he will even go so far as to ask if solitaires aren't sometimes used as engagement rings.

The clerk's answer usually removes the last vestige of doubt, and then the purchaser throws aside all reserve and selects from the assortment before him the ring which strikes the happy medium between the depth of his affections and of his pocket. Other men, again, walk in with the news just beaming from all over them. 'Engaged' is visible from the top of their heads to the soles of their feet. The purchaser of this class makes no secret of his errand, and usually departs on his way rejoicing in a very short time.

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"Oh yes," was the polite reply; "a son."

"Ah! indeed! Does he use tobacco?"

"Never touches it in any form."

"I am glad to hear that. The use of tobacco is very sinful. Does he indulge in spirituous liquor?"

"Never tasted a drop in his life."

"Excellent. Does he ever stay out late at night?"

"No, sir. He never thinks of going out after supper."

"I am very pleased indeed to know this; your son is a remarkable young man."

"Oh, he is not a young man yet. He is only a two-months'-old baby!"

We judge of others for the most part by their good opinion of themselves; yet nothing gives such offence, or creates so many enemies, as that extreme self complacency or superciliousness of manner, which appears to set the opinion of everyone else at defiance.

Be not frightened at the hard words "imposition", "imposture"; give, and ask no questions. Cast thy bread upon the waters. Some have, unawares, entertained angels.

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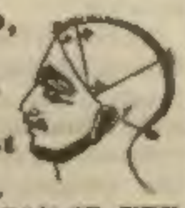

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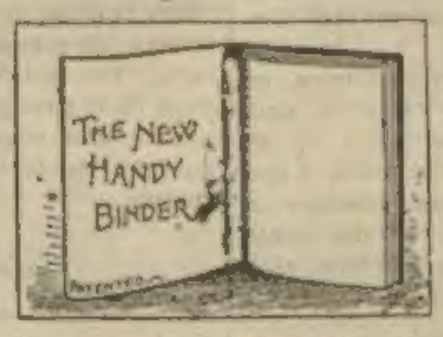

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Latest Fashion Phases.

The chief thing to remember in making and renovating seasonable costumes is that moire silk, either plain or striped, is the most fashionable material that can be combined with woolen fabrics. Both plain and pleated skirts are made of moire, and the corsage is trimmed to match.

In economically made dresses a portion only of the skirt is of moire, generally one side. In some cases the front or tablier is of moire, with a band of silk bordering the foundation-skirt, below the draperies of the tunic.

In another good model, in which moire may be substituted for velvet, one breath on each side will be sufficient for the skirt. The corsage might be of woolen material, with revers, plastron, and other trimmings of moire, and a passementerie or bow of moire ribbon could be used for draping the tunic instead of the embroidered revers.

Moire silks of all kinds are fashionable, but the most stylish are those which are watered in wide stripes, or in which wide watered stripes are alternated with wide satin stripes.

Brides cannot do better than choose moire for their wedding dresses, either alone or combined with satin.

A fashionable and simple way of making the dresses is to have the front of satin, arranged in a fan pleating from the waist, with a trimming of lace and flowers down one side. The bodice and train are of moire, both quite plain, and the train is mounted in fluted pleats. A silk lining to the lower part of the train is a necessity, as it is very likely to turn over and disclose the lining.

This toilette afterwards forms a very handsome dinner or evening dress; the bodice can be cut open in a moderate point front and back, and the sleeves shortened to the elbow for dinner wear; while for more dressy occasions a second bodice may be provided, of satin, cut low and without sleeves, with draperies of lace around the neck, and lace sleeves caught up on the shoulders with bows of moire ribbons. Similar bows or colored flowers may be substituted for the orange blossoms in the lace trimming at the side.

Last year's mantles will not require much alteration to make them fashionable; those with sling sleeves will be rearranged, and mounted on a yoke, rounded, square, or pointed yokes of passementerie may be added to black mantles to give them a more modern appearance, and similar passementerie ornaments should then be put on the square mantelet ends.

It is still early for cotton dresses, but those of our readers who like to prepare their dresses early in the season will be glad to know that those of last year will need little, if any, alteration to render them again serviceable.

Full bodices, especially those crossed in front, will be much worn, but short waisted bodices are also made with a little fulness in the centre of the front and back only; a deep plain basque, open in front, is added to the bodice, and the plain skirt is mounted in pleats.

Pointed bodices, with a drapery on each side of an embroidered plastron, are made with a finely-pleated basque, four or five inches deep, joined on to the bodice under a pointed ribbon waistband, fastened on one side with a bow.

The turned-down collars and cuffs are pleated in the same way.

The skirts of washing dresses are either plain, and mounted in rather wide flat pleats, or draped like those of woolen costumes.

The bordered prints and cambrics, of which there will be many varieties, and those in wide stripes, may be made up as very simple draped skirts, the folds of the draperies held up by ribbon rosettes or bows; when these are removed the tunic becomes a mere full skirt, easy to iron, and which can be re-draped on the dress-stand in a few minutes.

Different styles of drapery may be introduced in this way, and the appearance of the dress considerably altered by a change in the draping.

In costumes the prevalence of the redingote style is very noticeable, many of the handsomest dresses for day and dinner wear being made in this way. Another point to be noticed is the employment of extremely rich brocbe in patterns that are always large, and sometimes little less than gigantic.

In one model the redingote is of brown and gray broche silk, open in front and at the back to show the skirt of gray moire silk, bordered with a deep pleating. Another dress is of a magnificent silver gray brocade, over a salmon-pink skirt.

Cloth dresses, especially those of rough, but light woolen in wide stripes, are also made in redingote style; but draped skirts are still to be worn, and many good examples are shown.

These are chiefly in cashmere, very often combined with another material, such as striped or moire silk, but in many cases trimmed only with gold embroidery on velvet, or with some new variety of guipure, as, for instance, a dress of lichen-green cashmere, with a gracefully draped skirt and pointed corsage trimmed with open guipure of whipcord and silver thread.

A pretty dress for a young lady, in a rather simpler style, is of striped gray-blue woolen, the skirt well draped and ornamented with a panel of green guipure. A short jacket, composed entirely of guipure, opens over a very much puffed plastron of cream surah.

A mixture of gold and black beads is fashionable as a trimming for mantles, and many of these are also adorned with passementerie in gold, bronze, brown, and other colors harmonizing with the material.

One model, trimmed with this many colored passementerie, is of bronze velourine, short at the back with moderately long mantelet ends, lengthened by the addition of a graduated pleating of the velourine, which gives them the shape of a pointed leaf.

Black mantels are richly trimmed with very fine jet in braids, appliques, and drop fringes; in shape there is but little novelty, but this is compensated for by the great beauty and lavish employment of the bead and lace trimmings; lace bretelles and long pleated ends of lace in front give lightness and grace to mantles.

For summer wear, when jet is too heavy for comfort, the small mantles in soutache and gauze will be appreciated; meanwhile, the pretty cloth jackets, in fraise, terra cotta, dark blue, brown, and fancy mixture cloths, either plain or ornamented with gold cord or braiding, are stylish and fashionable.

Three styles prevails in these—the tight-fitting, the jacket with straight fronts fastened at the neck only, and that opening over a braided waistcoat.

Small parasols will be reserved during the coming season for carriage use; the new models are very small in size, and chiefly of white lace, white moire silk, or for young ladies, of white muslin, and all have white handles decorated with bows of white moire ribbon, or with white silk cord and tassels.

Black parasols are made chiefly of lace, or of fancy striped gauze, with black ribbon bows and trimmings, but unless black be absolutely necessary, white en-tout-cas will be employed.

Smocked parasols made of Indian silk, in red, white and one or two other colors are a novelty, but less pretty than the dainty and charming white lace parasols.

For ordinary use the white en-tout-cas, made of moire silk, of white handles, either of enamelled wood, tipped with gilt or gypsum knobs, or of finely carved ivory, and with gilt ribs, will lead the fashion, and one could not wish for anything more stylish than these plain but rich umbrellas. For those for whom white en-tout-cas are too luxurious there are similar models in plain, striped spotted, and other colored silks, with long promenade handles, which enables one to use the en-tout-cas as a walking stick.

Many of these handles are very quaint and made of Japanese carved wood, of the stalks of palm leaves, of thistle wood, etc. The Viennese handles are decorated with ivory beetles, spiders and other creeping things, life-size and painted to look like nature. The floral parasol of lace over silk, with their pretty wreaths of flowers round the top and edge, must also be reckoned amongst the forthcoming novelties for the season.

Odds and Ends.

ABOUT A CHARMING ROOM.

The drawing-room, we are going to describe, is a little gem of a place, snug, comfortable, and, withal, stylish looking. The old-fashioned fire-place was a puzzle to the new tenants. How an ugly fire-place will assert itself! There was no overcoming its obtrusiveness but by banishing it and replacing it with a new one, or by covering it closely with a wooden or Lincrusta casing.

After long consultation as to expense, it was decided that it was not worth while to spend so large a sum on so prominent an object, so the marble antiquity was carted away, and a most delightful artistic ingle nook was set up in its place. It is of white enamelled wood.

In the back is the tiled hearth and standing grate, and dogs are there for supporting the fire irons. Above, and far beyond this, rises the wooden structure with projecting sides and canopied top.

Over the grate are panels of bevelled glass and shelves for ornaments, and on either side are the chimney corner seats, luxuriously cushioned. Above these the nook is partially open, and copper plush curtains are some railed work. Again, still higher up are small corner cupboards panelled with glass. I wish I could give a sketch of this "telling" bit of furniture.

The walls are covered with Japanese leather paper, white, with a raised pattern in lacquer, and the woodwork is also white. So far all was easy to manage; no crude colors had to be considered, the only fear was that the room might look cold—a fear that was dissipated directly Victoria took it in hand.

The boards are stained a light oak, for a width of about three feet from the wainscot, the remainder of the floor is covered with an Eastern carpet, in which dull red gold and greenish blue predominate.

So much, I think, in securing good effects depends on the draping of materials, to only a few does the art comes by intuition. One of our first artists is said to have been three days casting the drapery for his great *genre* piece. There are some women, who, with a touch here, another there, will throw off a most skillful arrangement at a moment's notice. She avoids a multiplicity of small folds and too numerous "catchings up" into loops. The bay window that fronts into the garden is curtained with peacock green and gold brocade, and Madras muslin.

Opposite the ingle nook is a glass door, through which a pretty conservatory is to be seen, filled with flowers, and ferns, and drooping creepers. The drapery here is elaborate.

First, the rod crosses the top by which the curtains are suspended; just beneath is a looped breadth of peacock green plush, edged with fine Vandykes, which fall over a netted fringe. The plush ends, edged in the same manner fall down cascade style, at the sides. The curtain of gold brocade are hung so that they cross each other, the nearest one reaching quite to the end of the rod, is caught through double cords a little lower than the valance, afterwards falling in straight folds to the floor. The under one is looped through longer cords in the same way, and is caught up slightly a second time half way down the door. A few tassels finish off the cords. Beneath are Madras curtains, frilled, but showing little, still they are requisite to soften the whole.

Between the door and the ingle nook is a semi-grand piano, of which Victoria is justly proud. It was a welcome wedding present, and gratifies not only the sense of hearing but that of sight as well. In the bend of the instrument she has placed a table enamelled olive green; it has a cover of brocade bordered with copper plush, and on it stands a fine fern, the pot draped with gold silk.

In the corner is a cabinet made to fit the angle, it is enamelled olive green, has a shelf at the top for china, a space for books (without which no room is perfect), and below are some grand old china pots filled with rose leaves.

The chairs are enamelled white. The expense of these was infinitesimal compared to the cost of a suite of drawing room furniture such as would have satisfied the desires of these fanciful folk.

True, the seats are cane; but some cheap sateen cushions soon covered them with the loveliest brocaded silk squares, of the most indescribable shades of color, that harmonise exquisitely with the carpet and curtains. A sofa was out of question so they invested in a wicker lounge, and, at the same time in a pot of white enamel. A coating of the latter soon rendered the lounge sufficiently presentable to accord with the rest of the furniture. The matress, for it is covered with a brocade, and a copper plush cushion finishes off a very pretty settee. This is set across the corner by the fireplace.

Behind it stands an old easel which has been enamelled olive green, holding a good-sized board covered with copper plush.

An English barrister was lately summoned before the benchers of his inn, charged with serious professional offence of accepting a fee of half a guinea when his brief was marked with a guinea. The offender was severely reprimanded and informed that he had departed from "the best traditions of the bar." He respectly urged that he imagined that he was following "the best traditions of the bar" inasmuch as he had taken all he could get. So struck was the benchers, either with the force of this observation, or the talent displayed by the culprit in his own defence, that they let him off without further remark.

Confidential Correspondents.

DISCUSSION.—Your brother-in-law's wife is no relation to you.

J. M.—The process of extracting oil from rose leaves is too lengthy to give in these columns.

H. M.—"States' Rights" are the rights of the several independent States as opposed to the authority of the Federal Government.

JAMES B.—The Clearing House is an association of national banks in every large city, formed for the purpose of facilitating banking transactions.

E. F. E.—It is not correct for a lady to leave her seat when shaking hands with a gentleman, unless she be the hostess, when she would naturally rise to greet her acquaintance.

HARDY.—Your second marriage is not legal without a divorce, to which you are entitled in the circumstances you mention. Your first wife has by her conduct forfeited all claim upon you.

REX.—In playing a game of draughts a piece cannot first become a king and then take one of the adversary's men in the same move. A king is made in a forward move, and when the draught reaches the crowning square, it must remain until the opponent has played.

F. R. M.—The replating of goods cannot be performed by an amateur. You would waste quantities of silver in only learning the art. It is done by respectable firms at a very low cost. Damp does not "stain" plated ware. Good polishing with the best whiting and water is the only safe treatment for discoloration.

SCHUMANN.—In 1711 the pianoforte was invented by Christofori, of Padua, in Italy; in 1753 a system of scale fingering, in which the thumb was first brought into use, was employed by Bach; in 1799 the Clementi pianos were made, which may be called the earliest modern pianos. On these facts you can build your essay.

PERCY.—The first glass window in England was one put up in an abbey about 680. Glass windows, however, did not become general there for many hundred years. As late as 1377 the glass casements at Alnwick Castle, the Duke of Northumberland's seat, were regularly taken down when the family were away from home.

W. C. E.—Your failing sight may depend upon short-sightedness, or it may not. Anyhow, if the spectacles you have seem to benefit you, you would be very foolish to abandon their use altogether because your friends ridicule your appearance. Such conduct is very unkind, and many a lad's sight has been ruined from a similar cause. It seems certain that you want spectacles; the only thing is that you want them properly fitted, and for that purpose a good optician's opinion should be taken.

W. G. N.—The heat produced in the arc of the electric light is of the most intense nature; metals which resist the greatest heat obtainable with a furnace, such as platinum and iridium, readily melt when placed between the carbons of the arc lamp. Gold burns with a bluish white light, and silver with a beautiful green. In the small incandescent lamps the light is obtained from a thin thread of carbon kept at white heat by the resistance it offers to the passage of an electric current, combustion being prevented for some time by its being kept in vacuo.

INIS.—To rivet china it must first be drilled with a common drill; but the safest method is to use a brooch-drill, as no spear-pointed drill can be tempered hard enough not to break. The brooch can either be used as a drill with a bow or by the hand. The drill chosen should be of such a bore that it will make a hole as near the required size as possible, and should not be used on the china too near the edge of the fracture. As the work is being done, remember to drill lightly and lubricate with spirits of turpentine and oil of lavender, or a little sampher to place of the latter. Then take your pieces of wire, which you should have already cut to a required length, and pass them through the holes, bending the two ends inside. If the wire does not exactly fit the hole, fill in with plaster of Paris mixed up with water into a stiff paste.

PERPLEXITY.—This correspondent is engaged to a lady who is a saleswoman, living in lodgings. He is a little hurt at certain things which have for some time past been going on. For instance, the lady is in the habit of visiting friends, with whom he is acquainted, without him, and he is much upset that he is not asked to accompany her. Now, it is obvious where the fault lies. It is natural that Perplexity should like to share in the enjoyment of his fiancee by taking her to parties, balls, and weddings which she from time to time attends. But there is certainly no actual obligation on the part of those who entertain her to invite him too, and the matter is one that rests entirely with the young lady and himself. If she is aware that the fact of her attending parties, and so on, without him is unpleasant to him, she will surely, if she really cares anything about him, stay away unless there be special reasons for going; and our advice to Perplexity is that he should open his heart to his future wife in a straightforward way, and arrive at a thoroughly clear understanding with her on the subject.

ANXIOUS.—We think—to put the matter briefly—that the gentleman who loves you, would make you a good husband. Consequently, your chances for domestic happiness would be greater than by marrying one you loved, but who did not love you. Community of tastes in literature is all very well, but it is only one of the ornaments of married life. It can well be dispensed with, if there is love on one side—that side being the husband's—while with love on both sides, its absence would never be felt. In part we think your ideas wrong. The highest and best result of all education is a good heart. Take our word for it, the overflowing richness and exuberance of sentiment which marks courtship generally, drops to a natural level soon in the atmosphere of marriage. Men are only men whether found in a palace or a cabin. Talk and oef are two things with the best or worst of them. And by acts men must be judged. We might mention hundreds of instances of the highest and most cultured—in a literary or social sense—that the world knows, and their lives as men are or were the exact opposite of their teachings and pretensions. And now to make the application of these facts: The sweetheart whom you do not love may not talk in a manner to elevate you above yourself, but he may love and honor your womanhood. This is better, far better, than ideal elevation. The ideal person you have in your mind's eye, might swim in oceans of sentiment before marriage, and beat you the day after. Mind: we say these are only possibilities, but if we were in your place and had to make a choice, we would choose—we think—exactly as we advise you to do.